A SOLDIER'S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CIVIL WAR

BY S. BLACK

MEMBER OF THE FIRST IOWA BATTERY

—WITH—

Supplemental Chapters By Comrades

THROUGH RESPECT FOR ITS AUTHOR AND THE "BOYS OF THE BLUE" THE PUBLICATION OF THIS VOLUME WAS UNDERTAKEN, AND THE PUBLISHERS TRUST IT MAY BE A PRICELESS TREASURE TO THOSE WHO ARE SO FORTUNATE AS TO POSSESS A COPY

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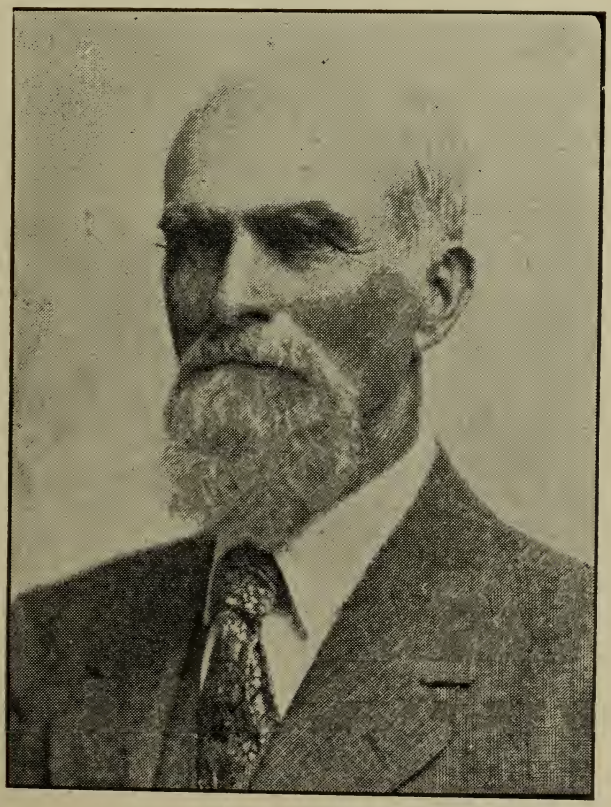
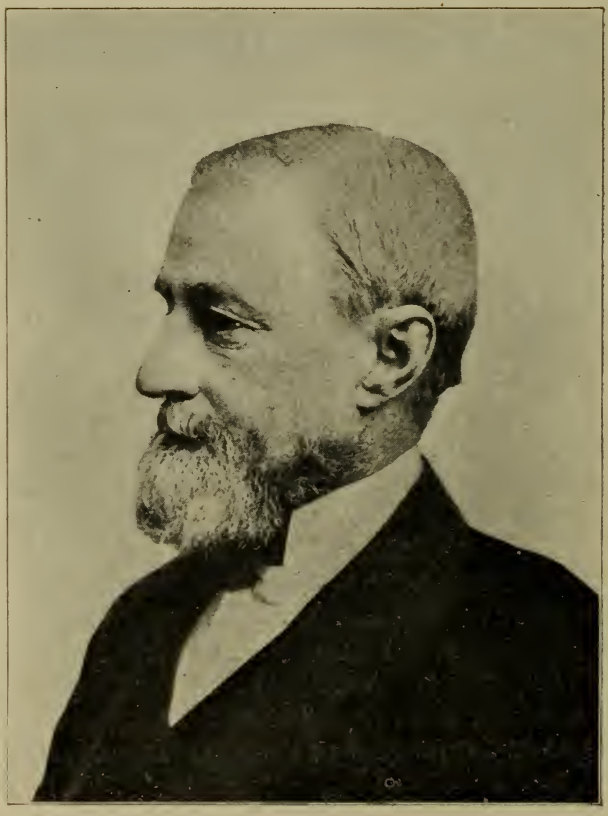


SAM BLACK

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

NEARLY a half century of years have sped silently away since the close of the great Civil War in the United States, and silvered the locks of the survivors who participated in that terrible and titanic struggle, and left them in the tottering feebleness of hoary headed age, with the memory of those stirring events slowly and forever fading away. Now, to preserve some of those yet remaining recollections I write these chapters as they come to mind, and dedicate this little volume to my comrades of the First Iowa Battery and their kindred, in the humble though fervent hope that it may meet their cordial approval, and earnest appreciation, and that they will kindly overlook any mistakes that may occur in its pages, as I have written entirey from memory. Many thrilling scenes and events of deep interest to the men who made the history of the First Iowa Battery have been omitted, because long since forgotten. Much of that missing history we find supplied in the supplemental chapters kindly contributed by comrades who were active participants in those events therein recorded, which along with their pictures, having donned the gray as prescribed and fashioned by the edict or decree of time, will add much of interest to the book, for all of which we tender our sincere thanks.

S. BLACK.



CAPT. H. H. GRIFFITHS

A SOUVENIR

THE following obituary was written by Eli D. Ake, editor of the Iron County Register, at Ironton, Mo., and a member of the First Iowa Battery:

"The counterfeit presentment given on the preceding page will pass current with every Comrade of the First Iowa Battery. Though taken in life's sere and yellow leaf, when the sound of the grinders was low and the pitcher about to be broken at the fountain, it happily recalls the features known to us in the prime of manhood.....

The scenes and incidents of the old days return to us as in the haze of a half-forgotten dream; but with affection's stronger memory are recalled the virtues of him, who, in the exercise of the arduous duties of his position, stood in loco parentis to every member of his command.

CAPTAIN GRIFFITHS is now but a fading memory; but

'His bones are dust,
His good sword is rust,
His soul is with the saints, we trust,'

may be reverently said of him as of any knightly paladin of old."

Errors Corrected

Page 24 should read 76th Ohio regiment, not regulars. Page 45, 4th division, not 14th; Battle of Champion Hills was not fought until after Jackson was taken; 15th Army Corps, not 5th. Page 48, whizz of rifle bullet not whining. Page 55 should read, while white flags were displayed. Page 56, gum blanket, not gun blanket. Page 59 should read 14 days over-time. Page 66, Battle of Missionary was fought Nov. 25. Page 70, logs dragged, not drayed. Page 39, assigned to 13th A. C., not 12th.

A SOLDIER'S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CIVIL WAR

CHAPTER I.

WHERE RECRUITED—THE CAMPAIGN IN MISSOURI

THE First Iowa Battery was recruited from the eastern portion of Iowa, with about forty men from Illinois; was rendezvoused at Burlington, Iowa; mustered into the U. S. Service, Aug. 17, 1861, with C. H. Fletcher as Captain. Captain Fletcher was a student of West Point Military Academy and held a commission in the regular U. S. Army. So we had the benefit of a thorough Drill Master, and we were put through the evolutions of drill with lively industry.

December 1861 we received the following order: "Proceed without delay with your company to Jefferson Barracks, on the boat of the Keokuk Packet Company.—By Order of Major General Fremont C. McKeever, A. A. G.

The Battery here received its armament and equipments, of four six-pound bronze guns and two twelve-pound field howitzers.

Our first real soldiering was the arduous campaign which closed with the sanguinary battle of Pea Ridge, fought March 7th and 8th, 1862, more than forty-eight years ago. Yet the thrilling scenes of those two terrible and eventful days still remain fresh in memory, and each fleeting year as the 7th and 8th of March draws near, much of what then and there transpired in my immediate surroundings comes vividly to mind, and I behold again, living, dead and dying comrades, and can almost hear the echo of the rattle of musketry and roar of artillery, and see our loud mouthed cannon as they belch forth smoke

and flame, sending shot and shell into the ranks of the enemy. Although the writer hereof participated in other desperate battles, none of them left such lasting imprint on his memory as that of Pea Ridge. This was one of the most sanguinary conflicts of the Civil War, and considering disparity of numbers and subsequent results, was one of the grandest achievements of the Union armies which occurred during that eventful struggle. The plan of the Confederate Campaign was to concentrate a powerful army in Northwest Arkansas, under command of some of their ablest generals—Earl Van-Dorn, General-in-chief, with such eminent subordinates as Ben McCulloch with his invincible Texas rangers; Sterling Price with his victorious Missourians, heroes of Lexington and Wilsons Creek; McIntosh with his Arkansas hosts; General Pike with his Indian braves—altogether an army of 35,000 men of which they might well expect efficient service for the Confederate cause. They were to move on Gen. Curtis' little army of 13,000 men, defeat and capture it; then march triumphantly to St. Louis, Mo., but feebly guarded; then on to Springfield, Ill. "The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft aglee."

Such was the plan of the Confederate campaign, as the writer hereof saw disclosed in a newspaper published in Little Rock, Arkansas, and the only apparent obstacle in the way of successful consummation was the Army of the Southwest under command of Gen. Curtis, with Gen. Seigel second in command; Col. Asboth, 2nd division; Col. Jeff C. Davis, 3rd division; Col. Carr, 4th division—an army all told of about 13,000 men, known as the Army of the Southwest, whose purpose it was to drive the Confederate forces out of Missouri and hold that state in the Union. Its first offensive move was directed against Gen. Price, then in occupation of Springfield, Mo., and the country southwest.

Gen. Curtis' base of supplies was at Rolla, then terminus of the St. Louis & Frisco R. R., from which point all of our munitions of war must be transferred in wagons over rough, muddy roads, through a country

infested with bushwhackers and guerillas, so that our supply trains were often captured and rations "cut off."

January 28 our army marched from Rolla toward Lebanon distant sixty-five miles. The roads were in bad condition. Continued rain, snow and cold made this one of the most trying marches of the war.

At Lebanon we halted a few days, meantime doing some target practice. On the 9th of February we resumed our march toward Springfield.

On the evening of the 12th our picket was fired upon by General Price's picket five miles distant from Springfield. During the night all were in anxious expectation of the great battle that did not occur the next day. Long before daylight we were forming in battle array and in the early morning were moving in line of battle on the enemy's vacated winter quarters. They had fled during the night so we took peaceable possession of the city. This was a disappointment as we were "spoiling for a fight."

Next day the race after Price's army began. Then real soldiering commenced. The first day we passed Wilsons Creek, where Gen. Lyon fell, and halted late in the evening only a few miles in the rear of Gen. Price's army, having marched 25 miles. On and on, day after day the race continued. The enemy with an inferior force not willing to risk a general engagement. To escape seemed to be his only intent and purpose. In his flight many broken wagons, worn out horses and mules were abandoned. Toward evening our advance would overtake the rear guard of the retreating enemy; then a running fight would last till night-fall. When our ilttle mountain howitzers, or "jackass battery," as we called it (which consisted of two small brass cannon mounted on mules and fired from their backs, designed for rapid movements with cavalry), would begin to bellow in front, the command would pass back along the line, "Forward, double-quick, march!" The troops so footsore and worn out with long and rapid marching, that each step was torture, would raise the battle cry and go forward pell-

mell, the artillery at times in full gallop over stumps and stones, often throwing the cannoneers from their seats on the ammunition chests, to be bruised by the fall. One soldier we noticed by the roadside with a broken leg, having been thrown from a battery in advance of us. By the time our lines would be formed ready for a charge the enemy would skedaddle, having delayed our forces long enough for their wagon trains to get a few miles ahead. So the flight and pursuit continued day after day until late evening, our troops not having time to rest or cook any food until late at night. The weather was cold most of the time. Often our wagon trains would not get up with tents and provisions. Standing around our camp fires, hungry and chilled, our faces became sooty and black, and we were anything in appearance but dress parade soldiers.

Curtis finally halted his army in Benton County, Arkansas; Price continuing his retreat to the Boston Mountains, in which position both armies lay and rested preparatory for the coming battle. To obtain forage for his tired and jaded horses Curtis divided his forces—Davis and Asboth at or near Sugar Creek, close to Pea Ridge; Seigel's Division at Bentonville, twelve miles distant; Carr's Division at Cross Hollows, twelve miles south on the state road toward the Boston Mountains. In this position our army lay for several days, scouring the country for forage and collecting wheat and grinding it into flour for army sustenance, all of which was paid for in government vouchers.

Meantime the Confederates were not idle but were gathering reinforcements for an aggressive campaign.

March 5th we moved our camp. Some of us gathered leaves for a cozy bed. At 9 p. m. tattoo sounded as usual. Roll call over, we had just turned into our beds, when suddenly "boots and saddles" sounded and resounded in our ears, soon followed with orders: "Strike tents!" Rumor spread rapidly through camp: "The enemy is advancing!" which proved an accurate guess. Soon we were on the move; it was now our turn to run.

CHAPTER II.

THE BATTLE OF PEA RIDGE, ARKANSAS

THE night was bitter cold; the wind roaring through the trees seemed aught but cheerful, and to climb the long stony hill out of Cross Hollows as a "starter" was a heavy task for our artillery. Our horses many of them balky, not having worked for two or more weeks, refused to pull, and we could not make them believe the enemy we had been chasing was now after us. With the help of the 4th Iowa Infantry of our brigade we finally reached the hilltop. The gun to which I was assigned as cannoneer was in the rear and far behind, so to reach our place at the rear of the column we whipped up full gallop. Our caisson wheels struck a stump, throwing the men from their seats in a rough and tumble manner. One man was so badly hurt he could not walk, so we got him back on the caisson and wrapped him in blankets. We took turns holding him on the night through, walking alternately to keep warm.

We got back to Pea Ridge a little after sunrise, March 6th, where our generals spent the day selecting positions for line of battle, some of our troops fortifying Sugar Creek Heights looking southwest along the State Road from whence the enemy might attack. During the afternoon we could hear the roar of Seigel's guns. He was overtaken in his return from Bentonville, and was fighting his way back to join the rest of our army now at Pea Ridge, which place Curtis had chosen for battle. At nightfall Seigel's division came in and was greeted with loud cheers. Situated as we were, far from our base of supplies, in a hostile country, facing an enemy vastly superior in numbers, every man was needed and none to spare. During the night no hostile gun was heard, the enemy being busy massing his forces for the morrow.

The sun rose bright and clear the 7th. Curtis' army breakfasted early and was ready for

the fray. Soon the suspense was broken; the enemy had encompassed our position, Price and Van Dorn passing around in the rear of our left wing, McCulloch, McIntosh and slack in the rear of our right, resting their center on the old State Road, thus cutting off all chance of retreat toward our base of supplies. Our army must now quickly about face and form a new line of battle, with Carr's division of 3,500 strong holding our right against Price's army of 12,000 men, with Asboth on our left, Davis and Osterhause in our center facing the troops of McCulloch, McIntosh, Slack and Pike. Our battery, the First Iowa, of Carr's division was now ordered to a certain point to be masked in the brush and await in silence the approach of the enemy. Before reaching the designated spot, the heavy columns in gray could be seen across Hog Hollow distant about six-hundred yards, moving in line of battle. Quickly we placed our guns in position and opened the ball. Thus the First Iowa Battery fired the first shot in the battle of Pea Ridge. The Confederates had come to fight; soon there was something doing. In a few moments our division was hotly engaged with Price's Missouri troops. The incessant crash of musketry and roar of artillery, amid curtains of rising smoke, appeared both to sight and sound as if two wrathful clouds had descended to the earth, rushing together in hideous battle with all their lightning and thunder. The deadly whizzing of rifle bullets, loud bursting of shell and shrapnel, rattle of cannister, shrieks of the wounded, groans of the dying, seemed like music for devils at the harvest of death. Price's artillery was pouring it's concentric shot and shell upon us with terrible effect. Any reply we could make seemed but feeble resistance. Gen. Carr rode in the rear of our guns saying, "Give them hell boys; don't let them have it all their own way, give them hell." His brave conduct inspired us with fresh courage, and we were in need of it, though I believe every man at the guns had made up his mind to die there, for it did not seem possible any of us could get out alive.

For about two hours we stood

in that tempest of death, during which time three of our ammunition chests were blown up, and several men burned and disabled and horses killed by the explosions. Our ammunition exhausted, we were forced to fall back. Our battery was relieved by the 3rd Iowa Battery. After replenishing our stock of ammunition we went in again for the fight to a finish. I had been wounded in the left ankle and was unable to walk, so I was forced to crawl back to the rear as best I could as our line was steadily beaten back, contesting every foot of the ground. In my retreat I would keep the trees between me and the deadly bullets. Finally reaching an ambulance I was taken to Elk Horn Tavern, which was being used as a field hospital.

Now I could realize somewhat the situation. It was about midday and the fighting was terrific all along our lines. On our left and center volley after volley sounded, while with Carr and Price it was a continuous crash and roar. I never heard anything to equal it in any other battle.

Thus the battle raged until eventide. Two of the Confederate generals, McCulloch and Slack, being slain, their troops gave way. Between Carr and Price the fight still raged until darkness interposed to stay the tide of death. Combatants rested upon their arms ready to renew the conflict when daylight returned. Relief for the wounded, tears for the dead, was the order of the night.

As to the status of the two armies, honors were about equal; the enemy's right and center had fallen back and Gen. Carr's lines had been pushed back about a mile. All day he had bravely contested the field. He had asked help but received none. During the entire day Seigel's Division had not fired a gun. They were guarding our rear, from which direction we were expecting an attack.

With each battery in the field is a battery wagon and forge—a repair shop on wheels, supplied with tools for wood, harness and blacksmith work. The men who use these tools are called artificers; are noncombatants, and are kept back from danger as far as possible. During the after-

noon one of them came to the hospital. I got on his horse and rode to camp, and was happy to get away. There were more wounded than the surgeons could care for, so I did not present my case. Next morning Dr. Robbins of the 4th Iowa infantry came and dressed my wound. Of all sight sickening places it is a field hospital during an engagement. The soldiers disabled were brought in by the hundreds, presenting all manner of wounds. The surgeons were busy cutting and carving like butchers; arms and legs dissevered lay thick around outside, while inside were some of the unfortunate victims of the bloody day. Some were praying, some swearing, some laughing, others crying, some groaning, many dead and dying. I did not want to stay there.

After the day's fighting the battery came back to camp to get food for men and horses and much needed rest. The boys spent the night talking over the thrilling events of the day and speculating as to the morrow. No one who has not passed through such an ordeal can know the feelings of comrades as they meet and shake hands after a battle. But all were not there; some were lying on the bloody field, forever at rest from life's pleasures or woes, others on beds of pain.

The battle was not done; nothing was sure as to the final result. The night was spent in realigning the troops. Seigel's division was brought to the assistance of Carr. By daylight every available man was in line ready for business, "And the day brought battle's magnificently stern array."

At dawn the booming of cannon and rattle of musketry aroused that almost wilderness country with a reveille such as it may never know again. The cannonading for a few hours was terrible; then our whole line moved forward with a heavy fire of musketry, and about 11 a. m. a grand bayonet charge finished the work; the enemy's lines gave way and were soon in full retreat, pursued a few miles by our cavalry. Thus ended one of the hardest fought battles of the Civil War.

Curtis' army, badly bruised and broken, remained master of

the field. The Confeds came next day under a flag of truce to bury their dead. Some of our dead had been scalped by Gen. Pike's "Indian Braves." Our loss was heavy. Gen. Dodge, in his official report, gave every third man hit. The First Iowa Battery was part of Dodge's brigade. This victory gave our army a big batch of generals. Curtis and Seigel were promoted to major generals; Cols. Asboth, Carr, Osterhause, Vandaver, Heron and Dodge were made brigadier generals.

For several days Curtis' army rested upon the field, binding up wounds and burying the dead. To the mournful strains of the dead march and the final volley the boys were laid to rest, their blankets for their winding sheets, the wilderness for their tomb; the lonely winds to chant their requiem.

CHAPTER III.

AN ARDUOUS MARCH—INCIDENTS OF ARMY LIFE

AFTER the battle of Pea Ridge, and arduous preceding campaign, Gen. Curtis' "Army of the Southwest," battle scarred and somewhat battle scared heroes, paused to rest and recuperate for a season. Our work so far had been pretty well accomplished. The Confederate army, under command of Gens. Van Dorn and Price, organized for the invasion of Missouri and Illinois, were driven back in discomfiture; they abandoned their purpose, moved eastward across the Mississippi river, leaving the state of Missouri and northern part of Arkansas under control of the Federal forces.

The First Iowa Battery was badly crippled in the recent engagement. Our captain, C. H. Fletcher, had been ordered to his post in the regular army; Lieut. Jones had been elected by the company as captain of the battery; he and Lieut. Gamble were wounded in the fight; our first lieutenant, Davids, was detailed as Chief of Ordnance on Gen. Curtis' staff, taking with him one of our most efficient sergeants, Horr, and soon after the battle Capt. Jones resigned, saying he had had enough fighting, and swore he would never go into another battle; Lieut. Gamble was sent home so severely hurt that he did not return to the battery for several months. This left the battery with only one commissioned officer, Lieut. Harbach, in command. We were also short on men, short on horses, so to keep the battery in efficient working order soldiers were detailed from infantry regiments comprising our brigade to fill the vacancies caused by loss of artillerymen. As to myself, I was getting along "pretty well, thank you." I had been hit by a 6-lb. cannon ball ricochet shot, second bound. I saw it, and tried to dodge it, but was too slow motioned to escape. A bone in my ankle was fractured. The boys cut some forked sticks for me so I was on crutches for awhile. When the battery moved I could

ride so was not left or sent to the hospital.

INCIDENTS OF THE CAMPAIGN.

Two of our men, Geo. Wermouth and Wm. Patton, were taken prisoner by Gen. Price's body guard and were kept with them. All the while they were detained as prisoners they were generously treated by "Pap Price," and were furnished food and clothing from their commissary. After a few weeks they were exchanged.

During a lively skirmish with the enemy's rear guard, Gen. Curtis ordered the lieutenant commanding the section of the battery to which I belonged to a certain point in the line two or three hundred yards distant. Lieut. Davids, commanding the battery, saw the guns moving but did not hear the general's order, and pre-emptorily ordered: "Halt! Bring back that artillery." Gen. Curtis said quietly, "don't I command this battery? Guess I do; move forward, Lieutenant."

About the first of April, '62, we started on a line of march eastward across the Ozark mountains, and such a march seldom falls to the lot of an army. The country was rough, mountainous, and sparsely settled, in most part by backwoodsmen, half hunter and half farmer, with seeming little industry at anything, living in rude cabins located in the narrow valleys along the creeks, cultivating a few acres of ground to corn, potatoes and pumpkins. From this poverty-laden country we must obtain most of our horse feed. Our animals, for lack of food, became weak and poor; the roads were often muddy, our march slow and toilsome; the army most of the time on half or quarter rations—at times none at all—trudging wearily over flint hills which shown almost white as snow for miles away. A few stunted hickory trees were growing out of the rock, apparently without soil to feed upon. We passed some ridges of soil or dirt heavily timbered. Most of the time our road led along creeks, would cross over a mountain to another creek and valley; sometimes it would take half a day to reach the mountain top, having to double teams to haul guns and caissons up the steep. At the foot of the mountains

along the valleys were bold, running springs in plenty. After about two weeks' march we reached Forsythe, a little town on the White River at the head of steamboat navigation. Here, it was rumored, we would meet boats laden with supplies. A chilly rain had been falling for several hours; no steamers to cheer our sight, no hard tack to relieve our hunger. About noon wet and cold, we made camp without shelter or food since the day preceeding. We could make fires to warm us which was a luxury. After a little rest I went foraging in a last year's cornfield and found a few ears of corn, so our mess had parched corn for supper and corn parched for breakfast. A generous hearted cousin, Henry Paddock, of the Ninth Missouri regiment came to visit myself, brother and cousin, W. J. Watson, and finding our commissary, haversacks and stomachs all distressingly empty he went to his regiment and procured 20 or 30 pounds of flour which he donated for our benefit. Soon dough was being rolled and baked upon which our mess feasted with gustatory pleasure—better than Delmonico with its viands and wine. For a time we ceased sighing for the "land where milk and honey flows."

In the evening our supply trains arrived from Rolla and the feast became general. "Turn out and get your mail" was also a cheering call, as we got news from home.

After three days' rest we resumed our march toward Vera Cruz, distant 40 miles, over mountains and streams rougher than any we had passed. Three days of marching brought us to settlements in the valleys of Bull and Bear creeks where we found goodly supplies of forage.

Two days' rest, and marching orders set the army again in motion climbing mountains and fording streams.

Again our rations grew short; a few wagon loads of grub could not last long. One evening we went into camp without rations but plenty of hunger, so after guns were parked and horses cared for, four of us went in quest of something for our appetites. About half a mile away, down in a little cozy valley, we

found a log house with the regulation fireplace. As it was unoccupied, we took peaceable possession. To our delight we found some potatoes which had wintered over in the ground. Sitting by a bright blazing fire roasting and eating potatoes until midnight, and then sleeping on the floor before the genial fire was a happy event in my soldier life long to be remembered. The only thing to mar the pleasure of the occasion was reporting to early roll call or we might find trouble.

The next morning, hungry and dilapidated in stomach and courage, the army resumed its march. The army halted for a day's rest at Vera Cruz, a town of three or four houses and I believe a county seat, thence to West Plains. The country was comparatively level, the marching easy, and forage more plentiful.

We rested a few days at West Plains, then pushed due south to Batesville, Ark., a little town pleasantly located on White River.

We were now so far from our base of supplies, Rolla, Mo., that for subsistance we must depend mainly on forage from the country. At that early period of the war private property was carefully guarded, by orders from headquarters, and private property taken was paid for in government vouchers, chickens and pigs excepted. These were confiscated by soldiers who were not authorized to give vouchers. It was extremely hazardous for a rooster to crow near a soldier's camp.

From Batesville foraging teams were sent round about the country gathering supplies. Mills were pressed into service grinding wheat and corn for army sustenance. Oat fields were ripening; soldiers were sent forth to gather the golden grain for our poor and jaded animals. Thus the army was busily engaged for two weeks loading rations in transportation wagons, preparatory for a forward move toward Little Rock, the state capital.

About the middle of June the army moved forward, crossing White River on a pontoon bridge kept with the army for such emergencies. Frequent heavy rains

made the roads so muddy and deep it was difficult to get artillery and heavy transportation trains along.

At Searcy our advance division had a severe fight with the enemy in the field to oppose our march on the capital. They were repulsed and made a hasty retreat, as they did not have sufficient force to offer successful opposition.

We were within fifty miles of Little Rock and could easily have captured the city.

Our rations were exhausted, so the army must fall back again to Batesville for feed. We were three days without rations before getting there.

Again our pontoon bridge was laid and we recrossed the river. A pontoon consists of rubber buoys inflated with air, with rails and plank laid on forming a bridge which is held secure by ropes attached to a large cable stretching from shore to shore a rod or two above the bridge; a slender structure to uphold heavy wagons and artillery, it would seem. "Praise the bridge that carries you safely over."

CHAPTER IV.

THE MARCH DOWN WHITE RIVER

DURING a portion of the long and tiresome march from Cassville, Mo., to Batesville, Ark., Lieut. Harbach was in command of the Battery. Previous to that time he had served as quartermaster, in line of duty as second lieutenant. Not being trained to command, it was a trying position for him, so, to relieve him that he might return to duty as quartermaster, Gen. Carr, commanding our division, had Capt. Brown, a former West Point Student, now Captain in the 13th Ill. Infantry, now detailed to take charge of the battery. This caused most of our boys to feel quite indignant for an officer to be placed over us, not of our battery. But we soon learned to respect Capt. Brown; he proved to be well worthy of the position and was careful and considerate as to the rights of the men. However, Capt. Brown did not long remain with the battery; Capt. H. H. Griffith of the Fourth Iowa Infantry was commissioned by the governor of Iowa as captain of the battery. This was another indignity, as we felt that some of our own men should have the position. Capt. Griffith proved to be a very efficient officer; brave almost to a fault, always sharing danger with the men.

Back to Batesville, the work of gathering supplies again commenced. The mechanics throughout the army (enlisted men) were detailed for the work of building flatboats, which were loaded with provisions and manned with soldiers, some to run the boats, some to fight the enemy along the river banks. All were protected by cotton bales around the sides of the boats. Everything ready our army started in line of march down White River, the boats floating leisurely along with the current, stopping at convenient points to put off rations for the army. In this way our march continued a distance of about 150 miles to Clarendon, a little town on White River, 60 or 70 miles west from

Helena Ark., on the Mississippi River.

During this march our army had some fighting with Confederates under the command of Gen. Hidman in the field to oppose us. Most of the country from Batesville to Clarendon is low and swampy—almost a wooded wilderness of fever nests and mosquito pests, so that our march was anything but a pleasure excursion. Some places we had to build corduroy roads to get across swamps. One place our road led along an elevation of land between two wide spreading swamps(Crowley's Ridge). Here the enemy had made a formidable abattis by felling the heavy timber across the ridge. Behind this they were stationed for battle, but fled after a short but sharp contest. The Confederates employed their plantation negroes to cut the timber. Gen. Curtis also employed them to remove the logs and brush and clear the road, for which service he gave them and their families free papers as contraband of war —the first slaves set free by the Rebellion. They followed the army to Helena. It was comical to see them trudging along with their big bundles of clothing "toted" on their heads.

At Clarendon it was expected we would meet gunboats and transports with supplies, also hospital boats for our sick, which we were hauling along in ambulances and baggage wagons. But no boats to meet us, no kind friends to greet us. They had been here and waited several days, but could not learn the whereabouts of Curtis' army, so burned the town and steamed away, leaving us without supplies in a land of destitution.

Our flatboats had given up the last ration; something must be done. Soon came the order to burn our tents, knapsacks, and extra clothing, and prepare for a forced march to the Mississippi River, 60 or 70 miles distant, to Helena, Ark., the nearest available point. The country we must traverse was low and swampy most of the way. We crossed only one stream of running water and that sluggish and muddy.

It was now midsummer; the weather extremely hot. To say the troops suffered would be but

a feeble expression of a lamentable fact to many, especially the sick who were being conveyed in ambulances and rough transportation wagons, burning with fever, with not a drink of cold water to slake the thirst or cool the aching brow. Some could not withstand the hardship and forever closed their eyes on the terrible scenes of war. We burried them in the hour of night and left them sleeping by the wayside, where "Death's dirge plays its everlasting round."

The few inhabitants along the way were extremely hostile; they would fill their wells with fence rails and logs to prevent us getting water therefrom. Their efforts were of little avail; the debris was quickly removed and the wells dipped dry. A soldier would go down and dip to the last cupfull to be divided so that all might get a cooling taste. I saw Col. Wyman stand at a well passing the water so that all might get a little drink. It was common to hear, "I would give anything for a good drink of water." Trudging through the dust under a scorching sun, weakened with hunger, was terrible. Many fell by the wayside to be picked up by the teamsters, or to rise no more.

The last day of our march we fared better. We passed several large plantations along White River Valley, richly laden with growing corn. Roasting ears were plenty; roasted in the hot coals and ashes, with the husk on, then stripped clean, were so good, better to a hungry soldier than "possum and sweet taters" to a hungry negro. Some places the negroes who had heard of our coming were boiling the ears of corn in large kettles handing them to the soldiers as they passed.

July 15th, 1862, our army worn and weary arrived at Helena, Ark.,our eager sought haven of rest. As our advance reached the river, one of our government steamers was passing down the stream. The stars and stripes were displayed and the boat signaled to land. Thinking it was the ruse of an enemy, the boat kept on its way, until a few artillery shots across its path persuaded it to shore. It was joyous for us to behold again the great, majestic river. We felt as

if we had emerged from a hostile wilderness and reached the borderland of home and peace. We well knew with easy means of transportation it meant for us full rations and clothing, newspapers, and letters from home. For weeks our communication had been so cut off that our army had been lost to the War Department. We had marched, from Rolla, Mo., to Northwest Arkansas, back through South Missouri and through Arkansas to Helena, a distance of seven or eight hundred miles, part of the time during inclement winter. We had waded creek and river, through cold and storm, and neath the scorching rays of a southern sun had trudged footsore and weary, often camping without shelter or food; we had climbed over mountains and waded through swamps; we had met and defeated the enemy in several combats; in a fierce struggle at Pea Ridge we had defeated a well disciplined, ably commanded army with more than twice our numbers; altogether it was one of the most trying and arduous campaigns of the war. Being so far removed from the main seat of hostile operations, most writers have failed to give full and detailed accounts of it.

I desire to say in just praise of Gen. Curtis that he fully merited the high esteem and respect entertained for him by his soldiers. Unlike many of our officers, he seemed to fully recognize and appreciate the fact that we had voluntarily consented to brave danger, endure hardship, and if it should be our lot, meet death for our country; not that we were mere machines to be trampled upon or to be set up to be knocked down for the glory of someone else, or for a general to gain another star. He was ever watchful for the welfare of his troops. He would frequently ask when riding along our line of march: "Boys how are you; how are you standing the march?" Although he has long since passed to the final camping ground, he will not be forgotten by the boys in blue who followed him through the perils and hardships of that long and trying campaign.

CHAPTER V.

IN CAMP AT HELENA, ARK.

THE first night at Helena, after our long, weary march we camped on low ground near a small creek that supplied us with water for man and beast. Before morning we received an over supply; there came one of those torrential rainstorms common in that country, which overflowed the creek and flooded our camp with about a foot of water. So we roosted on our gun carriages until morning, when we moved our camp to a high bench at the foot of the hills, shaded with stately beech trees—a pleasant spot for summer quarters. We were soon supplied with rations in plenty—the old army ration—not good, but better than starvation. The "hard tack" was packed in boxes branded B. C., which the boys interpreted, "baked before Christ," which seemed applicable as they were infested with worms, and sugar cured hams the same. Such as it was we had enough, and enough was as good as a feast.

Settled down to the duties of camp, the first leisure hours were spent in writing letters home. After a few days the most cheering call heard in camp was, "Turn out and get your mail."

The negroes whom Gen. Curtis had given freedom as contraband of war had followed the army. They were assigned to duty—the men as teamsters, the women as cooks. Teamsters were in government employ, thus relieving enlisted men for other duty. Our battery seemed to be a kind of headquarters where they would congregate often for an old time plantation dance to the music of violin and banjo. And the "juba pat" made merriment the night through. It was a treat for all, as it broke for a time the dull monotony of camp. As spectators, we could hear the music and see the dancers.

With the paymaster came the sutler and occasional games at chuck luck and cards. For a few days money was plenty—until it passed to the hands of the sutler and the soldier was "dead

broke." Not all of the soldiers staked their money on games; most of them sent their money home, ex ept a few dollars for stamps and paper and little luxuries they might buy from sutlers.

Helena was then a town of several hundred inhabitants. Gen. Curtis had established headquarters in a fine mansion—the home of Confederate General, Hindman, who had been fighting us while in the wilderness. Some of the soldiers were employed building earthworks for the purpose of protection as a military post. Ft. Curtis played an important part the following Fourth of July, during the battle when the Confederates attempted to take the place. To prevent any wanton destruction of property, guards were stationed throughout the town. Our principal amusement was going to town; two or three soldiers might get passes for a day signed by the captain, so as to pass the guards. Sutlers stores were the objective places, where the boys often confiscated more goods than they purchased.

Standing guard and attending roll call was the routine of duty. The boys standing guard over the guns, which was the duty of the cannoneers, would sometimes sleep on their posts, so it almost became a habit. One night about the second relief, I laid down on a caisson for a nap. I slept perhaps half an hour; awoke and stood at my post on guard. Soon I heard footsteps coming nearer. I challenged, "Who comes there?"

"A friend with the countersign."

"Advance friend and give the countersign."

It was the captain. He complimented me saying: "You are the first man I have found awake on post for several nights." The next evening at roll-call my name was read: "Private Samuel Black is hereby promoted to the rank of Corporal and Chief of Caisson in the 3rd Detachment, for general good conduct as a soldier." Did I tell of my fortunate escape? Not much.

So the days and the weeks passed, the monotony brok en by an occasional scout out in the country after bands of Confederates who would make their pres-

ence known by disturbing our pickets.

One section of our battery to which I belonged was detailed to go with the 56th Ohio Infantry on an excursion down the river two or three hundred miles. We had for the occasion two transports and one gunboat. Our two guns were on board one of the steamboats, from the deck of which we would shell the woods along the shore where Johnnies were hiding. One evening we had anchored out in mid river, a negro came to the bank and signaled. The gunboat sent a yawl and took him aboard. He told of a camp of Confederate soldiers nearby. At sunrise the next morning our boats weighed anchor and we began shelling the enemy's camp. After firing a dozen or two shots, we landed. Our infantry and one gun of our artillery went in pursuit of the fleeing Confeds. Our boys after an hour or so returned without any spoils of war. Near where we landed was a rich plantation. A half dozen or so of us went to the house; no one was there—everything, negro quarters and all, was vacated. Breakfast was just set on the table, so without ceremony we did eat, but did not further disturb the house. After breakfast we carried some melons, roasting ears and sweet potatoes to our boats so that we could fare sumptuously yet some more. Soon we were again floating down the stream. When we reached a place called Eunice Landing our boats were hitched fast to a big wharf boat and we started back. We made slow headway against the current. After a week or ten days' absence we landed again at Helena, where the wharf boat was used for commissary stores. One of our boys, W. F. Conner, a good soldier, always ready for duty when able, fell sick during the trip and was sent home on sick furlough, but returned again ready for a soldier's fate.

During our stay at Helena there was much sickness and many deaths. Our battery lost several men. The solemn and mournful notes of the dead march as a soldier was being carried to his final rest was heard every day. Hospitals were established for the sick while some were sent home. Our Quartermaster

Sargeant was sent away on sick leave and I was detailed to fill the place. In this position I had lots of work to do—no time to get sick or homesick. I must issue rations to each mess(eight) every morning, so much for each man; distribute feed to 150 or 160 horses and mules, three times a day; besides going to the general commissary once every ten days for our ration supplies and twice a week to the slaughter yards two miles distant for fresh beef. One trip I noticed a negro three or four rods from the road leaning against a bank in a sitting posture. I supposed he was asleep; but a few days after I saw he was still there, but dead and half buried. We became so accustomed to death our emotions were not much disturbed by the passing of a human being unless he was a relative or messmate.

During the fall of 1862 thousands of newly recruited soldiers came to Helena, preparatory to a general and well organized move against Vicksburg, one of the strongest and most important holds of the Confederacy. Yes they were "coming to the call of 600,000 more," little dreaming of the bloody fates before them. To the new recruits, clad in new and bright uniforms, we old seasoned fellows in our faded suits of blue were a sort of curiosity, not having accomplished much. But they were soon to put down the rebellion. As things were shaping we well knew that our next move would be against Vicksburg, where thousands of men must bite the dust.

As an extenuation of the military offense of sleeping on post, before mentioned, I will explain lest the reader might think we were very lax in discipline. Thousands of troops were camped all around us and picket guards on the outside, so there was no possible danger of an enemy interrupting our guns. While discipline was not always so strict in camp, we never slept near an enemy. Gen. Carr, for a long time our Division Commander, was heard to remark: "The First Iowa Battery in not worth a dam in camp, but they are hell to fight."

CHAPTER VI.

THE MARCH DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI.

BEFORE entering into details of a new campaign it will be well to attend to some points not mentioned in former chapters belonging in that connection. In order to keep attuned with history, I will state that not all of the Army of the Southwest under command of Gen. Curtis marched to Helena; the Division commanded by Brig. Gen. Jeff Davis was transferred east of the Mississippi River and left us at Jasksonport, a town on White River, between Batesville and Clarendon. The next we heard of Gen. Davis was the tragedy of the killing of Gen. Nelson to whom Gen. Davis was ordered to report for duty. In making his report of stand of arms and men in his command able for duty, he said: "about," so and so. Nelson being a Regular Army officer, was not pleased with his report; he reprimanded Davis severely for inaccuracy and lack of discipline, which so enraged Gen. Davis that he shot and killed Nelson, for which he was court-marshalled and acquitted.

We were now pretty well pleased with our situation at Helena; the intense heat of summer had passed and Indian summer was on; a cold wave about the first of October had killed the mosquitoes; the health of the troops was improved; our bread ration was better, in place of the old musty hardtack we had good fresh bread baked in our company bake oven, flour being issued to all the troops. Some of the regiments had movable iron bake ovens on wheels. One of the boys of the First Gun Detachment, W. S. Tate, and myself were detailed to construct an oven for use of the battery. This we did by procuring brick from an old chimney about two miles distant, of which we builded a good bakery. John Gabelin, a professional baker was excused from all other duty and detailed as baker, so we had good fresh bread every day. Wild grapes, almost as good as our home grown, and pawpaws,

were abundant in the woods, so we had some fruit, much to the need of the soldier as to health and comfort; in fact, had the army ration consisted of more fruit and less salt bacon, the health of the army would thereby have been conserved.

While at Helena three of our boys, absent without leave, were reported as deserters; they never returned and their fate we never knew. The drum beat and bugle calls of the new regiments, both infantry and cavalry, served to enliven the camp's drills. Reviews and the display of the panoply of war was the order of the day. Lieut. Gamble, fully recuperated from the wound received at the battle of Pea Ridge, returned to the battery and reported for duty. Some of the boys absent on sick leave also had come back able for duty; of those I remember Sargeant Lebert and W. F. Conner, both of my detachment and mess. Sargeant Lebert was placed in command of a section of the battery (two guns) acting lieutenant, so B. A. Antrobus, our gunner, took charge of our detachment as sargeant. This left the position of gunner vacant. Antrobus requested Capt. Griffith to appoint me to fill the vacancy, to which he consented if I was willing to give up my place as acting quartermaster sargeant, to which I readily agreed. So I began my duty as gunner, more dangerous, but less arduous than my former position.

As all things, good and bad, must end, so with our soldiering at Helena; finally the order came to break camp. On the 22nd. of December, 1862, we moved to the river preparatory to embarking on transports for the move against Vicksburg. The whole army, finally embarked, and with gunboats, mortar fleet, and all the grand paraphernalia of war formed in line a mile or more in length, moved down the river toward the doomed city. The weather was ideal. The sight was grand beyond description—far more beautiful than pleasant. The boats floating at intervals of about 50 yards with gunboats interspersed along the line, with their heavy ordnance looking defiance to our foes, colors flying, drums beating, bands playing, it seemed

as a grand pageant on a pleasure excursion. But according to the old addage: "Every sweet has its bitter," the nightmare of death was ever o'er us; well we knew that in a short time many of the actors in this scene would be laid out gory and cold.

Under the present order and organization of the army all to us was changed. Officers new and strange to our battery were in command. Gen. Curtis was not with us. Gen. Sherman, chief in command; Steel, our division commander; Thayer of Nebraska Volunteers, commanding our brigade, composed mostly of new regiments, except the 4th Iowa Infantry of our old brigade from Rolla, Mo. We were glad to be with them, for well we knew they would stand by our guns to the last, as they had done before.

At first, riding on steamboat seemed easier than marching on land. To the common soldier it soon became irksome. The officers occupied the boat's cabin, the soldiers being crowded on deck about like hogs in a car for shipment, with no place to sleep in comfort. Artillerymen fared better than infantrymen. We could get nnder our gun and caisson carriages and on the ammunition chests so as not to be trampled upon, but not so good for rest as stretching upon the ground—and for our poor horses, crowded together for days, it was horrible. The trip was long and tiresome, the boats running only during daylight, at night being tied up along the shore and pickets posted on guard. No one except guards were permitted to go on shore. There was no way or place to cook except that we could take hot water from the engine boiler for coffee. Hardtack and raw bacon did the rest.

One very dark rainy night a soldier fell off the boat just above us. We heard his cries for help, the yawl was lowered and two of the boat's crew went to the rescue, but to no avail. The man floated under our boat and sank, and his pitiful cries were heard no more.

About the 27th of December we reached the mouth of the Yazoo River, which empties into the Mississippi a few miles above Vicksburg. Along the banks of the Yazoo, as far up as Haynes Bluff, was to be our field of oper-

ations and line of attack, so if possible to get position on high land in the rear of Vicksburg. The gunboats had preceded the transports up the Yazoo and were shelling the woods and feeling the enemy as far as Haynes Bluff, which they found strongly fortified. Under shelter of the gunboats the army debarked in face of the enemy strongly intrenched in the bluffs along the river, thus guarding any advance toward the rear of Vicksburg.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CAMPAIGN AROUND VICKSBURG.

MY last chapter brought Sherman's army up the Yazoo River two or three miles above its confluence with the Mississippi, where the troops were landed. That the reader may more fully understand the situation and the difficulties which beset the assaulting forces it is well to explain somewhat the topography of the field of operations. The Yazoo River flows to the Mississippi from a northeasterly direction. The river is wide and deep, with sluggish current, from Haynes Bluff to its mouth, thus being favorable to the operation of the gunboats. Along the south side of the river about a mile back is a line of bluffs known as Walnut Hills, which extend four or five miles from the Mississippi to a point where the Yazoo sweeps along near the foot of the hills, known as Haynes Bluffs, before mentioned. Along the foot of this chain of hills is a wide slough called Chickasaw Bayou. In this valley or basin between Walnut Hills and the river was Sherman's line of battle in the open except that most of it was heavily timbered. On the high land on the east side of the Mississippi River and south of Walnut Hills stands the city of Vicksburg. The Confederate line of defense, strong by nature and strongly fortified, extended from Haynes Bluff to the Mississippi River. At Haynes Bluff obstructions were placed in the river so it was impossible for our gunboats and transports to pass under the destructive fire from the enemy's guns in forts and rifle pits commanding the river. So the only way of reaching the rear of Vicksburg was by breaking through the Confederate lines along Walnut Hills.

The Federal plan of campaign was for Gen. Grant to march from Holley Springs, Miss., with an army 20,000 or so strong to co-operate with Sherman. Thus coming by land in the rear of Vicksburg would have compelled the Confederates to abandon

their line of defense along Walnut Hills. Grant's base of supplies being captured he was forced to fall back, which left Sherman with 20,000 men to fight the battle, with an enemy superior in numbers and strongly fortified.

The first day of our landing the battle began. Our forces, moving in line of battle from under cover and protection of our gunboats, did not proceed far until we had found worse than a "hornets' nest." The "Rebs" opened on us with sharp shooters and artillery from their fortifications along the foot of Walnut Hills. Soon our guns were in position and making vigorous reply. So the battle continued, fighting by spells from different points, drawing the enemy's fire in a vain endeavor to find a weak or vulnerable point in their lines for a concentrated assault. Finally, during the afternoon of December 29th, a fierce and determined effort was made to storm their works. Our line of battle was formed near the edge of Chickasaw Bayou, with a heavy line of skirmishers and sharp shooters a few rods in front of our line of artillery. Heavy lines of infantry were lying close in the rear. Our sharpshooters kept up a scattering fire until the signal for the artillery to begin. The fire was rapid and terrific. The enemy did not make very vigorous reply; perhaps our storm of shot and shell made them feel better lying close behind their breastworks; or perhaps they were reserving their fire for the more desperate and deadly part of the conflict.

At length the fatal moment came! The artillery ceased firing. Obedient to command, with grim determination, the heavy columns of infantry moved forward. At once the hills in front seemed a sheet of flame and smoke! Cannon and musket "volleyed and thundered." Still our lines swept on and on, floundering through mud and water, at times above their knees, their ranks being rapidly decimated by the destructive fire of the enemy, until the head of our colums reached the enemy's lines where they were met by the unwelcome reception of prisoners of war. Several companies were captured. The main force, however,

of the assaulting column fell back and took position behind our guns, which again opened fire, and with a few shots closed the scene, when we fell back and rested for the night under shelter of our gunboats. Our dead and many of our wounded were left on the field during the night through a cold and chilling rain. Yes, "war is hell."

The next day was cloudy and drear. Our dead were buried and wounded cared for. Beaten but not dismayed the fight was continued. While our sharpshooters were peppering away, sheltering as best they could behind trees and logs, an old railroad grade reaching across to the hills was being cleared for a roadway. Our battery was standing in the open, in close range of the enemy's guns. It seemed like they could have shot us all to pieces, but they only fired a few shots at us. May be they felt sorry for us or were only laughingly giving us a dare. They, however fired a precussion shell at four men near us who were chopping on a log lying across the grade. The shot struck an ax, exploded and killed three of them. For some reason, to our delight, the plan of "invasion" via the grade was abandoned. Our lines fell back and rested until the last day of December, in the afternoon of which day we had orders to muffle our guns and move that night under cover of darkness to a point near the "Reb" lines. We were not allowed to make any noise, speak above a whisper, make a fire or even light a match. So near were we to the enemy's fortifications we could hear them talking. Part of their "chit chat" was of Lincoln's proclamation of freedom for the slaves, and how many of the "damned niggers" would be free next morning. Yes, it was New Year's Eve. We were to stand at our post by the guns and await for a signal gun to be fired from a gunboat, to begin a night attack on Haynes Bluff. The night was dark; a mist of rain falling. Cold and shivering we waited, and while waiting we pondered. Our thoughts went home—we could see our friends by the hearthstone, and they too were waiting in fear of the sad news that must come to some, yea many of

them before this "cruel war is over." Tired and weary with waiting, my cousin, Wm. Watson, and myself pulled a lot of Spanish moss from the boughs of trees hanging over us, made a bed, and slept with eyes half open ready for the signal gun which did not signal. Day dawned cloudy and cheerless, yet no signal gun to start the dance of death. Soon we were espied by "Johnny on the spot," and they opened fire on us—sharpshooter and cannoneer. We had no orders to fire, so laid behind trees and ate our breakfast of hardtack. Not knowing what might happen, we began to fortify our position. After working a few hours we had pretty good breastworks. Soon after dark we were ordered out from our perilous position as noiselessly as we went in. There were a few infantry pickets with us. They were left behind, to be gobbled up by the "Rebs" next morning.

We worked all night loading our battery on the boats. By morning all the troops were embarked and steamed away leaving "Johnny Reb" in his glory.

The surprise and night assault on the fortifications along Haynes Bluff which was to occur simultaneous with our artillery fire along the whole line at the signal gun, was abandoned, the plan of attack having been disclosed to the enemy by some of the boatmen, who fearing the danger, deserted to their lines.

Yazoo, it is said, means river of death. However that may be, many of our brave boys passed to the cold white arms of eternal rest along its dreary banks.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RETREAT—ATTACK ON ARKANSAS POST

OUT of the Yazoo River and up the Mississippi our boats sped away leaving the scenes of our late disaster, and further military operations against Vicksburg were abandoned for the present. "He who fights and runs away, will live to fight another day."

As to our next field of conflict we can only conjecture. The soldier is but a pawn on the military chess-board, a human jumping jack subject to orders only. In our present environment there was but little to enliven, animate or inspire. Crowded on the boats, without shelter, the weather inclement, our situation was not enviable, to say the least. About the third day of our voyage our boat tied to shore and a grave was hurriedly prepared for Wm. Boyd, one of our battery comrades. Wrapped in his blanket, with never a box or coffin, we laid him to rest on the west bank of the great river with only its turbid waters to murmur his funeral dirge.

Arrived at the mouth of the Arkansas River, our fleet, with our gunboats as convoys, moved carefully up that stream to Arkansas Post, where, under cover of our gunboats, within range of the Confederate guns of Fort Hindman, our troops landed preparatory for battle. Fort Hindman was a formidable looking structure, with several large siege guns under cover and one large pivot gun in the open, to be used against an enemy attacking from any direction. The guns within the fort were so arranged as to have perfect command of the river. The works protecting the guns were supposed to be quite invulnerable, being made of oak timber dressed eight or ten inches square, laid double at an angle of forty-five degrees, on the outside of which was railroad iron closely spiked, the foot of all being protected by earth-works. Through this wall were port holes or openings through which to fire the cannon. During the afternoon while

moving our guns from the boat the enemy fired two shots at us from the pivot gun "Lady Davis" so named. Their shots ploughed the ground near us but did no damage. They were quickly silenced by our gunboats, two of which lay a few rods above us near the river bank. After a few well-directed shots our guns ceased firing and one of our officers came on shore to better observe with his glass the effect of the shots. It was now near darkness but we could see men working on the fort and hear the noise of pounding on the iron casing. The captain with field glass said they were repairing the fort; the shots had knocked the railroad iron loose and they were spiking it down again.

Our battery all disembarked, and we moved to the edge of a thick woods not far distant, suspecting that we would make camp. Not so; something else for us to do. Let us now briefly outline the situation: Arkansas Post is located on the north bank of the river within a bend to the south about the shape of half a wheel. Within this circle were soldiers' barracks and a few houses. On the north bank of the river, at the point where the stream flows back to east end or limit of the half circle was located Fort Hindman, with an unobstructed view of the river and an open field along its north bank a distance of about a mile. The general course of the river here is from west to east. Extending west from Fort Hindman and north of the Confederate camp was a line of fortifications about three-fourths of a mile in length. North of this line of works several rods wide was an abattis of fallen timber, along the border of a swamp. To get through this swamp to our position on the right of our line of battle was our disagreeable all-night work. Some of the road must be corduroyed, which was difficult work in the darkness.

The night was cold, which added greatly to our discomfort. A few hours after day-light we reached solid ground, rested and fed horses and men, then took our place in line of battle, which almost encircled the Confederate works, and camp. Some of our troops were on the south side of the river, thus cutting off escape

in that direction. During the morning all was quiet, no hostile guns were heard to disturb the calm preceding the terrible storm which about noon burst upon us with terrific fury. The first gun fired from our gunboats was the signal for our whole line to begin simultaneously. With it a destructive fire from the enemy behind their fortifications was poured into our ranks. Yet firm and unyielding, our lines maintained their positions amid that tempest of death. Meantime the fire from our heavy rifled cannon on our gunboats was playing sad havoc with everything before them. The enemy's fortifications extending back from Fort Hindman, after the destruction of the fort, were exposed to their terrific fire. The big pivot gun "Lady Davis" while turned side to gunboats firing at our infantry was knocked out by a shot breaking away its muzzle.

Confronting our battery was the First Missouri Confederate battery, one that fought us at Pea Ridge. For awhile their shots came thick and fast. Their range was good, but most of their shots passed above us. One of their guns seemed to have my gun for a special mark. The moment it fired we could see the smoke from it and would drop flat upon the ground; then "up and at em," giving them a shot before they could reload. The fight continued until near sunset, both sides holding their position. Finally the order passed along our lines: "Charge bayonet!" Just at this perilous moment a white flag was displayed from the enemy's works. At once the firing ceased; the noise of battle gave place to the glad shouts of victory. After the preliminaries of surrender the men in grey stacked arms, prisoners of war. A heavy chain guard was placed about them whilst our soldiers not on duty enjoyed a night of peaceful rest. Monday, January 12, was devoted to burial of the dead. The field of battle presented some horrid sights, especially Fort Hindman, where our gunboats played without mercy. It was a veritable charnel house—the fort was knocked to pieces, guns dismounted, men all killed and torn in fragments, not a whole carcass to be seen; while

along the line of works men and horses lay in piles. It was a sad, sickening sight to see the horses belonging to every gun of field artillery lying dead with harness on, six to each piece. I noticed one man dead, face, whiskers and clothes burned, not a wound visible. Another most incredible sight: A man's legs cut off below the knees by a cannon shot, and the body had fallen back, leaving the stumps still standing on the feet. Another cut in two and the severed portions lying two or three feet apart.

This victory gave us 7000 or 8000 prisoners with a lot of munitions of war. Gen. McClermand, commanding the army, presented our battery with two new steel rifle guns captured. The captain of the First Missouri Confederate battery (captured) presented to one of our boys(Lon Blanchard) a fine pistol, as he said, for old acquaintance' sake, having as before stated fought us at the battle of Pea Ridge.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OCCUPATION OF NAPOLEON.—HOME-MADE BREAD

THE second day after the battle our troops with Confederate prisoners and trophies of war were embarked on board transports. The men of our battery except guards over guns and horses (on the boat) were permitted to remain on shore much to our satisfaction, until the morning. The prisoners seemed pretty well satisfied with the situation, or like true soldiers, trying to make the best of misfortune, entertained us and themselves with songs which were well sung, carrying soprano, bass and tenor. The song which elicited the heartiest cheers among them was "The Bonnie Blue Flag." The music was a treat for all.

Early morn the boats "tied loose" and floated down the stream. Soon after daylight a snow storm set in, with a brisk wind from the northwest. Wrapped in our overcoats and blankets we weathered the blast as best we could. Toward evening myself and two or three of our boys crept under the boilers of the boat where we kept warm for the night. It was a terrible hardship for the men in grey on the upper decks with no semblance of shelter. Arrived at Napoleon, a small town on the west bank of the Mississippi just below the mouth of the Arkansas, the fleet tied up and our troops debarked and occupied the town, the inhabitants having mostly fled. The prisoners, I believe, were taken to Alton, Ills., and placed in the old state penitentiary located on a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi river. And such are the fortunes of war.

For some purpose we were separated from our old comrades of the 4th Iowa Infantry and placed on board a boat with the 76th Ohio Regulars. They evidently had not learned the etiquette of the western soldiers, that it was a dishonor to steal from a soldier. To confiscate appetizing edibles from sutlers we regarded as retaliation for the extortionate prices charged for

their goods; but to steal from a soldier—no; there we drew the line. Those Ohio fellows must have mistaken us for sutlers—they stole overcoats, blankets, and what ever else we had worth transfer they could get. Of course, they were not all thieves; every regiment had its toughs. One of our boys, "Bill" Watson, to even up for the loss of his overcoat, appropriated a sack of flour from their commissary. Our mess, consisting of a gun detachment, occupied a little house in which we found an old dilapidated stove. But of course it just had to bake, so we ate biscuits and then ate some more. Tiring on biscuits, Billy Watson found a family out of town a little way who would bake light bread on shares. So he brought in a loaf 16 inches in diameter and three in thickness, having more the appearance of a grindstone in structure and weight than a loaf of bread. But it beat hardtack for a change. After a a few days' rest came marching orders; again on board the transports we moved down the river toward Vicksburg.

As a result of hardship and continued exposure there was much sickness and discontent among the troops. As we proceed toward the scenes of past and future conflict there is little of good cheer. The scenery along the lower Mississippi is dull and monotonous; stretching away from its banks on either side for miles are low bottoms, no hills or bluffs in view until we reach Vicksburg. Here the scene is changed. The river sweeps up against high and precipitous bluffs, crowned with heavy fortifications, with bristling cannon bidding defiance to blue-coated Yankees. A feeling of gloom and discouragement pervaded the army so that our voyage seemed more like a funeral procession than a pageant of war. I will quote from Capt. Griffith's official report to Adjt. Gen. Baker. Extract:

"We then went down the Mississippi River to Sherman's Landing, opposite Vicksburg, and debarked after being thirty-five days on transports, in mid-winter, where man and beast were cooped up without any proper opportunity to be anything else but supremely miserable. I look

upon this whole campaign as the hardest and most trying in many respects we had yet endured. The transports proved to be perfect pest houses; the smallpox broke out, and the battery had at one time thirty-five men sick with this painful and loathsome disease."

I will here note one little episode or incident which occurred during our last trip down the river. One evening, half starved as we were on the boat—no way to cook—my brother, R. M. Black, conceived the idea of getting something good for supper. So he climbed up over the wheel house opposite the kitchen. Watching his opportunity when the cook was out, he crawled through a window into the cookhouse and stole a big pan of biscuits prepared for the officers' supper; so a few of us feasted while the cook swore, and wondered, and the officers waited for a second relief from the bakery. The milk ration too must have run short; the cow on board the boat was milked about a hundred times a day.

At Young's Point, or Sherman's landing, our army disembarked, under the guns of the fortifications defending the city. The levee along the river banks had been cut, and the water flowing through, the country for miles inundated, so there was hardly enough dry land upon which to pitch our tents. Many of our soldiers were sick with measles and smallpox, dying about one hundred per day. A smallpox hospital was established 18 miles up the river at Miliken's Bend; a little hospital boat was busy carrying new cases of smallpox from the camps to the hospital, and bringing back the dead for burial. I stood at the wharf one day and counted 35 dead bodies carried from the boat, the result of one trip. Our cemetery consisted of an old railroad grade and the levee, which were soon filled with bones of the dead. Our battery lost several men from smallpox and measles; two died of homesickness who might have been saved by sending home. No furloughs were granted. It was rumored in camp that Gen. Sherman said it was easier to dig a hole for a man than make out furlough papers. Whether true or false, it

created a bitter feeling against Sherman.

For several weeks this unhappy situation continued. Why we should be placed there in mud and water, under the guns of the enemy, inactive, we did not know. They had one gun, "Whistling Dick," that could reach our camps. Every hour or so Dick would enliven us with a serenade. By and by Gen. Grant arrived and took command of the forces operating against Vicksburg. At once there was something doing for the betterment of the army. New clothing was issued, and old, pest-ridden garments cast off; the water receded, more land appeared in view; camps were moved; also came the paymaster with brannew greenbacks for the boys. Gen. Grant issued an order that all soldiers might buy at the commissaries dried and canned fruits and vegetables at the prices furnished to officers. The health and morals of the army rapidly improved; inspection and drills were ordered, and soon the men were in good fighting condition and hurrahing for Gen. Grant.

There seemed to be much maneuvering and planning to find a way to the rear of Vicksburg. The work of cutting a canal so as to pass the gunboats and transports below the fortifications guarding the city was tried, and finally abandoned.

One early morning the thunder of cannon, "peal on peal afar" was heard. Soon it was announced that Admiral Farragut had run past the enemy's batteries at Grand Gulf and Warrenton (a few miles below Vicksburg) and reached in safety with his flagship, Hartford, the ditch where our dredge boats were at work. This master stroke of daring was good war medicine for us "Yanks" and proved that the "Reb" guns were not so formidable as had been surmised.

CHAPTER X.

MORE FIGHTING AROUND VICKSBURG

ABOUT the middle of April, 1863 the First Iowa Battery was ordered to report to the 12th Army Corps and assigned to Gen. Carr's division. It pleased us to be placed under our old commander, but we did not so well like to be brigaded with regiments strange to us. Our battery was now so depleted in numbers that we did not have sufficient force to work the guns. Details from regiments with which we had been associated were returned to their respective commands, their places supplied by men from the 11th Wisconsin and 23rd Iowa regiments, all new to us and to battery drill; so we had to devote spare moments to lessons in our mode of warfare.

Gen. Grant's whole army was now on the move, marching down the west side of the river. Spring-time had come; grass growing, flowers blooming, everything in Nature's world bursting into new life seemed to animate and cheer, and lend hope and encouragement for the work before us. The overflowed condition of the country made it difficult for the army to move as we must ferry sloughs and bayous in small flatboats propelled by hand with poles. Meanwhile our fleet of gunboats and transports were preparing for the fearful ordeal of running past the batteries at Vicksburg. As the boat crews were too timid for the trying occasion Grant called for volunteers from the rank of the army to man the transports. In response to the call pilots, engineers, deckhands—all men needed—were soon ready for the daring feat. The boats and men were protected as much as possible by cotton bales placed around on the sides and decks. On the night chosen for the occasion the enemy fired a large building on the opposite side of the river, so that by the red glare the boats could plainly be seen. Almost the whole night through we could hear the roar of the cannon as they played upon our boats

while passing their perilous line of fire. As I remember, only a few of the boats were disabled. The army met them a few miles below the dreaded fortifications and were embarked and floated down stream.

We were halted at Grand Gulf by heavy batteries commanding the passage. Here from our position on the transports we witnessed the grand and magnificent engagement of our gunboats in a several hours' fight with the enemy, in a vain attempt to silence the guns in their heavy fortifications so that our fleet might pass.

Again the army was debarked and marched down the west bank of the river to Brain's Landing. Meantime, under cover of darkness, the night succeeding the fight, our fleet ran the blockade and met the army next day about noontime. At once the army began crossing the river, landing safely on the sacred soil of Mississippi, the home state of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy. Among the first troops was the First Iowa Battery. After moving about two miles we halted for supper and to feed our horses, immediately after taking up our line of march toward Port Gibson, ten or twelve miles distant. The 2nd Brigade in advance, commanded by Col. Stone of the 22nd regiment, Iowa Infantry; 4th Division, Gen. Carr commanding. The First Iowa Battery was well in advance, one gun of which was placed in front with the skirmishers. My position at this time was chief of caisson belonging to this gun. All in charge of Sargeant Wm. R. Lebert.

We were expecting some hot work, and were not disappointed. As before stated we had some new men detailed from infantry and were not sure as to their conduct under fire; consequently Sargeant Lebert asked me to go forward with the gun to help wherever I might be most needed. We felt that to our battery was given the post of honor and all were anxious to maintain our good name at whatever cost.

The night was still and cloudless; the stars looked down upon two grand processions of earth-born mortals moving toward the bloody field which was to be the beginning of the terrible struggle upon which hung the fate of

a city, (Vicksburg) perhaps a nation. Grant's army was marching in line, some of it yet back beyond the Mississippi river, while the Confederate hosts were pushing and hurrying out from their stronghold anxious to meet the invaders and hurl them back in discomfiture 'ere they would gain a strong position east of the river.

The "Yanks" had come to stay, and each mile traversed brought the hostile forces nearer the scene of conflict. The country through which we passed is cut up with deep gulleys and ravines so that our march was slow and tiresome. At length, as the midnight hour struck May 1, 1863, the contending forces met. The enemy's pickets fired a volley and retreated. We moved forward, cautiously feeling our way in the darkness, until near Magnolia Church, when suddenly there burst upon us a heavy fire from Rebel batteries at close range. Their infantry too soon joined in the dance of death and the onset was terrific. Our skirmishers were pretty badly demoralized and retreated a few rods behind our gun, but soon rallied and moved up in line. We were so near the enemy we could hear their orders above the din of battle. One command—"Charge, and take the d—— Yankee battery," could have been easily executed early in the fight. Our situation was critical for a short while, but we held our position and continued our fire, knowing that help was near. Our troops were rushing forward on double-quick and "swiftly forming in the ranks of war." We could hear the rattle of our gun carriages as our battery galloped to the front. I heard the command "Cannoneers post!" and felt glad. Soon our other five guns opened with fury. They took position to our left and rear leaving our one gun about half way between them and the enemy. Next came the 1st Indiana battery and took position a little to our right and rear in line with the guns of our battery; in a few moments they, too, were engaging the enemy. The storm of shot, shell and cannister over and around us was fearful. The Indiana battery fired a few shots at us thinking we were "Rebs." Our ammunition being exhaust-

ed, we must get back with the other guns of our battery. The ground was rough so it was difficult to turn our gun around. Sargeant Lebert climbed over a fence near by looking for a way to get back. While on an elevated ridge, swept with shot and cannister, he was struck with a fragment of shell and fell to the ground, calling, "Boys, I am killed! Write to my friends at Strawberry Point!" We got our gun back in position with the battery, minus three horses killed and four men missing

Our sargeant got back to the rear where he could be cared for and survived his wound, though a piece of shell passed through his neck under the windpipe, or trachea. We were glad to get out of our perilous position and could now somewhat enjoy the fight which was still raging. I here quote from Col. Stone's official report of the battle:

"As our skirmishers reached the head of the line in front of Magnolia church, they received a tremendous volley of musketry from the enemy strongly posted on the right and left of the church. The advance howitzer (our gun) was placed in position in the lane; the enemy suddenly opened a battery upon us at short range, throwing their shell in rapid succession all around us. Finding myself in the face of the enemy in a position carefully selected with a perfect knowledge of the ground, I concluded at once we had reached the place where the battle of the night was to be fought. The infantry were formed in line and the batteries placed in position on the ridge in rear of our advance. In the mean-time the howitzer in the lane commanded by Sargeant Lebert was replying to the Rebel batteries, with great spirit and apparent accuracy."

CHAPTER XI.

THE FALL OF PORT GIBSON, MISS.

IN my last chapter we were fighting the battle of Port Gibson, Miss. Soon our entire battery in conjunction with the First Indiana Battery opened upon the enemy and continued a heavy cannonade until about 2 o'clock in the morning, when as if by mutual consent the firing on both sides ceased and our men lay down beside the guns to await the coming dawn, when again the combat was renewed, the infantry on both sides joining with fury. The artillery duel of the night was one long to be remembered by those who witnessed it. The fire of the Rebel batteries, on account of their knowledge of the ground, was quite accurate, and many of our men and horses were disabled. The darkness of night, the screaming and bursting of shells, the rattle of cannister through fences and timber, conspired to render the scene presented by this midnight battle one of most terrific grandeur.

At dawn of day the battle was renewed. Re-enforcements had been rapidly coming up on both sides and the conflict was now one of great magnitude. Some of the best troops of the Confederacy against the western soldiers of the Union army, in a fair and open field. The conflict raged with unabated fury until about 10 a. m., when a general charge all along our line drove the enemy back in wild confusion. After retreating a few miles, and meeting with strong re-enforcement, they made another determined stand on a high ridge of open timber. In their retreat they left their dead and wounded on the field, besides the loss of a goodly number of prisoners and two cannon. I noticed one little fellow, a mere boy of fifteen or sixteen years; a cannon ball had passed through his breast. I thought, "some poor mother's heart will ache." As I passed a dying man he asked for a drink of water, which I gave him. He said he was a Union man and would die a Union man, but had

been conscripted into the Rebel army.

We were soon again heavily engaged, our battery being first to open fire on the enemy in their new position. Our guns were in an open field on a hillside sloping towards the enemy, fully exposed, they having the advantage of timber protection. Here our Capt. Griffith performed a feat of daring seldom equaled. A shell from the enemy bounding along, dropped into one of our ammunition chests. He grabbed it and threw it out before it burst.

Our sargeant (Lebert) having been disabled, it was now my duty to act as gunner. At one time whilst I was pointing the gun a shell from a 24-lb. howitzer struck the ground just under the gun and plowed into the earth beneath my feet, but luckily did not explode.

The fighting was fierce along our whole lines most of the afternoon, with little apparent advantage to either side. A little after dark our battery was relieved and we moved back to the rear for a rest and to partake of a supper of "hardtack" and coffee, and feed our tired and hungry horses, the first food for man or beast since the evening previous. Worn and weary, we slept that night, expecting to renew our part of the fight the coming morn. But when the morning came the foe was gone. Port Gibson and the heavy batteries at Grand Gulf on the Mississippi river had fallen into our hands.

Again I quote from Col. Stone's official report after the Rebs made their last stand:

"Their position was well chosen on a high hill covered with timber and commanding the entire grounds over which we were compelled to approach. My command was soon in line with Capt. Griffith's battery, First Iowa, in position, which soon opened with its usual spirit upon the enemy. Simultaneous with this the Rebel batteries opened upon us with accurate range, and for half an hour we sustained alone the concentrated fire of their infantry and artillery. Finally other brigades and batteries became engaged and the battle raged with great fury along our lines." Again at close

of same report: "With me there is a higher significence attached to the victory of yesterday than the mere defeat and route of the enemy. We fought the veteran troops of the Confederacy, who gloried in the laurels won upon earlier fields of the war. They were led by a general who fought us at the memorable battle of Shiloh. We have met them again upon more equal terms, and in a contest as fierce as Shiloh. Hand to hand we fought them, and demonstrated the fact beyond all dispute that the firey valor of the South is no match for the cool and stubborn courage of the western soldier."

I will here quote from the official report of Gen. E. A. Carr, commanding the Fourteenth Division of which the First Iowa Battery was a part, in his mention of batteries, regiments and individuals who distinguished themselves during the engagement: "First Iowa battery, Capt. H. H. Griffiths. Sargeant Wm. R. Lebert, First Iowa battery, who was mentioned for gallantry and good conduct at Pea Ridge, was with his piece on advance guard during the night march, and behaved with the greatest coolness and spirit. He was seriously wounded."

After the battle of Port Gibson our battery was placed back in our former position in Gen. Steel's division, Fifteenth army corps. Grant's army was now moving rapidly toward Jackson, the capital of Mississippi. The enemy falling back and fighting from every advantageous position, so in this way the battles of Raymond and Champion Hills were fought, in which engagements the enemy was defeated with heavy loss. Next came the battle and capture of Jackson in which the 5th A. C. participated. The last day of our march toward Jackson we were enveloped in a severe thunder storm. About 10 o'clock our advance encountered the enemy. The roar of cannon, the heavy peals of thunder seemed awe inspiring. Still through storm and mud our division pushed on rapidly forming in battle line in front of a heavy line of works, where we expected a hard battle would be fought; but instead, except a few straglers, the Rebs had fled. Those remaining threw up their

hats and ran to our lines as prisoners. One, a bright young man, stayed with our battery several days. Where he went from us I don't remember.

Before evacuating the city the enemy burned a large amount of cotton and army stores. One large warehouse containing sugar was burned and the melted contents spread over the ground, covering perhaps an acre. We cut out chunks of the taffy but found it too bitter to eat. That night our army camped round about the city. Our battery was near a rail road depot, so Sargeant Antrobus and myself played bum and slept in a box car. Guards were stationed within the city, so there was but little pilaging. Next day, Sunday, three guns of our battery were moved near a railroad bridge across Pearl River where we engaged in target practice, battering down the piers of the bridge in order to cripple Rebel commerce. The state penitentiary was located at the capital, also a large cotton factory, busy making cloth for Confederate soldiers' uniforms. These institutions were set on fire by order of Gen. Sherman. The owner of the factory claimed to be an Englishman and also claimed British protection. He threatened many and direful things, but could not stay the tide of destruction.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ADVANCE ON VICKSBURG.

GRANT'S army did not tarry long in and about Jackson; Vicksburg was the objective point, and the line of march was in rapid step in that direction, the 15th Army Corps holding the position of rear guard with the First Iowa battery in rear of column. We were halted in the outskirts of the city just opposite the Confederate Hotel which was flying from a staff on the roof a large Confederate flag. One of our boys, Geo. A. Coiner, secured the flag and carried it home as a relic or trophy of the war. As we moved away we could see the hotel enveloped in flames. Gen. Sherman states in his memoirs that it was set on fire by some Iowa soldiers who had been held there as prisoners a few months before and were insulted in a shameful manner by the people of the hotel.

The night of our second day's march from Jackson we camped on the fine plantation belonging to Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy. A wheat field of golden grain ready for the harvest (16th of May) was mostly consumed by our hungry horses. I entered a large library room near the family mansion. Some vandals had been there and thrown most of the books from shelves to the floor. Many of them were torn and spoiled.

At Black River twelve or fourteen miles from Vicksburg the Confederate forces had aligned themselves in battle array to dispute our crossing. A severe engagement ensued in which the enemy was routed and made a hasty retreat to their fortifications around the city. The last day's march toward Vicksburg the 15th A. C. was in advance with the First Iowa battery in the lead. It had been rumored in camp that morning that the "Rebs" were evacuating Vicksburg, which we hoped was true, for well we knew that to fight for it many a poor fellow must bite the dust. A few miles out from the fortifications we met some negroes. I asked an old

grey-headed one, who seemed greatly delighted to see the Yankee soldiers, if there were any Rebel soldiers down the road. "O yes sah, yes sah, they's lots of 'em sah; they gis layin thar lookin' out of the forts. They say they is goin' to pile you'ns up when you gits thar." Which was all true. If we halted for dinner that day I don't remember it. About 2 p. m. we met the enemy's pickets and skirmish line and soon the ball opened. The ground between us and the fortifications was in part heavily timbered, so we must feel our way cautiously, shelling the woods, our line of battle moving slowly, our battery firing from one position then another. So our battery had the honor of firing the first artillery shot in the fight around Vicksburg. One position we held in the open within musket range of their line of fortifications. Gen. Steel, Gen. Thayer and Capt. Griffith were near together on horseback, in consultation when suddenly the whining of rifle bullets admonished them as Gen. Steel remarked, "We had better scatter, they are feeling for us."

During the afternoon a squad of Confederate soldiers were captured, among them an officer with rank of major. He was very defiant and declared Vicksburg never could be taken by the Yankees; that the Mississippi would run red with blood before the Confederates would surrender.

Our lines were rapidly closing in around the doomed city. Our troops occupying such vantage ground as could be found within range of the enemy's fortifications, for two or three days. The battle, in most part was being fought with cannon and sharpshooters from both sides; the "Rebs" behind breastworks, we in the open. They were finally driven into their last line of intrenchments with all of their available forces. Their strong works at Haynes Bluffs and along Walnut Hills where we had fought them the preceeding December, and were repulsed, were now abandoned. Our army had at last fought its way to the coveted bosition on the high land in the rear of Vicksburg.

The final struggle is at hand for the great stronghold, the

Gibralter of the Confederacy, commanding the great river. Now as to the situation: The enemy's line of defense extended around the city in the form of a horseshoe, each outer end or heel of the shoe resting on the river —A position strong as it could be made by the most skillful engineering. Our army, about thirty to forty thousand strong encompassed them round about, with each flank resting on the river—we fighting in the open, they behind the best possible protection of cotton bales and earthworks. The 15th Army Corps, commanded by Gen. Sherman, held our right flank. Joseph E. Johnson, one of the ablest Confederate generals, whom we had driven from Jackson, with a strong force under him, was gathering re-enforcements from Bragg's army and other points, now threatening to strike a blow for the relief of Pemberton's beleaguered army. So it seemed Gen. Grant thought best to make a combined assault with our gunboats and take the enemy's position by storm. Accordingly, May 21st, the assaulting columns were formed behind the batteries, laying flat upon the ground while our guns all along our lines poured a storm of shot and shell upon the enemy. Finally the command: "Cease firing," and our lines moved forward. Not a sound was heard except the commands as our lines advanced. I well remember the grim determination resting on the faces of the men as they filed past our guns rushing on to the terrible encounter. Our line of artillery was on a hilltop, facing the enemy on a hill opposite—with nothing to obstruct the view. We could see it all for considerable distance, from start to finish. I hope I may never see the like again and would be glad if I could forget it forever. Our lines had not proceeded far when they raised the shout, I suppose to cheer themselves on. Suddenly a flame of fire and smoke burst forth from thousands of guns as they sped their messengers of death into the advancing columns. Still on they went undismayed, colors flying. We could see the head of one charging column nearing the fortifications; we could see the enemy running right and left

along their lines, massing their forces to repel them; we could see our soldiers fall as our lines pressed on; we could see the dead as they lay on the field. Finally our lines wavered, fell back, repulsed. As our men passed down the hill so that our shots would go over them, our guns opened with a vim never surpassed. "Vengeance is mine I will repay saith the Lord," was the feeling expressed by our shots. Finally the firing ceased; the storm had passed and many brave boys had passed forever from the heart rending scenes of war. Toward evening, under flag of truce our dead and wounded were carried from the field.

I suppose, believing the exigency of the case demanded the sacrifice, Gen. Grant ordered another assault, which on May 23rd was made with no less determination and little better results.

Our troops still maintained their position, continuing the fight mostly by artilery and sharp shooters. During this desultory bombardment most of the time we were busy with the enemy in our immediate front. One day we were firing pretty hotly engaged. Meantime, from a fort away to our right, the "Rebs" were firing at us with two 30lb rifled guns. They had a cross fire and were making it disagreeable. When the guns fired we could see the smoke and would lay down in some shallow ditches near our guns until the shot passed or exploded. (These ditches had been occupied by the enemy's sharpshooters.) So to make our hiding sure, Lieut. Gay took position as watchman. When a gun would fire, he would call: "Down!" We would run to cover, then back to our guns. At one time I was busy sighting my gun, resting on my right knee with my right side against the trail(a piece of timber about six inches square extending back from the axle of the gun carriage to the ground.) I did not hear the word, "down." A 30lb solid shot struck the trail and severed it in twain, passing a few inches behind my back. One piece of the trail hit my right heel, the other piece attached to the axle struck my right side, knocking me down. Capt. Griffith ran to the scene and said; "Black are yon hurt?" I replied: "I guess so," but soon found I was not seriously damaged, though my gun was several days in the hands of the artificer for repairs.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SIEGE OF VICKSBURG

THERE is a homely and familiar saying that hindsight is better than foresight, and this is used many times to justify events that do not result as expected. Surely if Gen. Grant had foreseen the disastrous results of his attempt to capture the fortifications guarding Vicksburg, there would have been one less terrible tragedy in the history of the war to record; many less sad and weeping eyes; many more joyous home-comings and happy greetings of loved ones, now, alas, forever mourned. Grant, however, in his history justifies himself by saying that his army was so elated and enthused over recent victories that it would have been difficult to restrain them to settle down to the comparative inactivity of a siege. That is the substance implied, but not verbatum quotations. I differ with such an opinion; the army had such great confidence in the skill of their commander that they were ready for any duty, no matter how arduous or dangerous, that would advance their success. As for myself, I know I would not have been hard to restrain from running up against breastworks bristling with cannon and bayonets in the hands of brave soldiers.

Finally comes the order to build breastworks and prepare for a siege. So now it is spades to the front while the sharp-shooters keep popping away. I need not tell you that men will work like beavers when they know each spadeful of dirt is liable to stop a bullet. Soon we had a formidable line of works encircling the doomed city and its brave and determined defenders. Some of our ammunition chests were dismounted and placed inside the fortifications; our horses and caissons sent about two miles back in the rear. My gun being disabled for a time, I was placed in charge of the caison camp. Our work was comparatively easy, principally procuring rations for horses and men.

Our line of communications

were now open to the north so that our boats laden with supplies could run up the Yazoo river and land within a few miles of our lines. Our base of supplies was the whole Northland with its bounteous harvests. We could also hear from home. There was not much to make us afraid, if the Rebel general Joe Johnson would only keep a respectful distance. Re-enforcements were arriving, so Gen. Sherman was sent back with ample force to hold him in check. We now held a full and winning hand on the boys in gray. Their source of supplies was cut off with no hope except that Gen. Joe E. Johnson could attack us in the rear and thus raise the siege. With cannon and sharpshooters the fight kept on so that if a man on either side showed himself above the breastworks he was a mark for bullets. One evening our boys had just eaten supper; one of our men, James Johnson, stood up and was looking toward the Rebels. One of our boys said: "Get down, you will get shot;" he replied: "They can't hit me." At that moment a bullet struck him in the forehead. He was buried that night; his warefare was ended. No matter how much or how hard it rained, the safest place was in the ditches.

At our caisson camp we were having pretty good times, thank you. We had pretty good water, some shade and lots of blackberries. Around our camp for considerable distance was large poplar timber—trees growing high and stately with a goodly undergrowth of wild cane and blackberry bushes, with dense canebrakes in the deep hollows. In this woodland we pastured our horses and picked berries. One dark night we heard a voice calling in the wilderness, "Boys come and help me; I'll pay you for it." So two of our boys went to the assistance of a newspaper reporter lost in a canebrake.

The soldier's life is not all trial and tribulation; there must be some bright spots with the shadows. Some played cards, some indulged in playful mischief. One of our boys, N. G. Wells, made a miniature cannon of lead, made shells of small pieces of cane stalks, loaded with powder and fuse. With this lit-

tle gun in the night time they would shell "Stonewall" out of his bunk. "Stonewall" was a detail from an infantry regiment. I forget his name. He was an odd kind of fellow whom some of the younger lads liked to tease. He had established his bunk upon a hill-side several rods from camp. The boys called him Stonewall because of his eccentric appearance and actions. About the time he would get well off to dreamland the boys would fire on him and shell him out. Stonewall would get on the war-path, but of course could not find anyone to fight. About the time he would be enrapped in slumber again, dreaming of "home sweet home" the artillery would open on him from another position. I too, would enjoy the sport for awhile, then order the firing to cease. We had to go to the river frequently for forage, with teams and men on detail to load the stuff. The boys seldom failed to make a raise of some sort from the sutlers. We had a man named Stilson, on detail from the 4th Iowa Infantry, always in for booty. One day he was on detail; I noticed him when he came to camp run into his tent and place a bottle under his bunk. While he was out unhitching his team, I shyly got his bottle, poured the wine into a cup, filled the bottle with water and placed it back, then watched the maneuvers. Stilson had a chum, Tom Ryan. They always shared each other's luck. We kept the bottoms of our tents turned up a little to let in the cool breeze. Soon Stilson returned and gave Ryan the motion to come. They stood outside the tent, Stilson reached in, got his bottle and passed it to his pard. To be polite, Ryan said: "After you." Stilson took a swig, tasted with an air of disappointment and said: "By God! it's water." Ryan tried it sadly, saying: "By God! it is." They never knew that Sam Black and Bill Watson drank their wine.

My gun was repaired and on duty in the trenches. Our sargeant, B. A. Antrobus was acting as gunner, so I remained with the boys at camp. I was ordered to report to the captain who was with the guns, so I saw and heard a little of what was doing both front and rear. I had

a good saddle horse and enjoyed the ride except about two hundred yards passing over a ridge in full view of the enemy. I nearly always got shot at, so did not tarry along that part of the path, but went in full gallop until their line of sight was passed.

Three or four times during the siege the artillery all along our lines was ordered to fire over the enemy's works into the city—always in the evening after twilight. The flash of the guns in the darkness, the steady roar of 300 pieces of artillery, the bursting of bombs, some of them high in the air, the burning fuses in the shells like fire-flies in grand display altogether presented a scene at once grand and awe inspiring—long to be remembered.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SURRENDER OF VICKSBURG

FROM day unto day the siege continued. Where the lay of the land would permit and advantageous positions could be held, our lines were advanced, especially at Ft. Hill in front of Gen McPherson's corps. Bastions under the fort were being mined with the purpose of blowup the fort, thus making a breach in the enemy's lines and capturing that stronghold. Finally the long and tedious work of tunneling under the fort was completed and the powder placed in position. On the 25th of June the mine was exploded with terrific force, immediately followed with an assault by our forces, which after some severe fighting was repulsed. Again on the 28th another mine was exploded with like fruitless results.

An incessant fire was kept up from both sides, especially along the water front held by our gunboats and mortar fleet, until the afternoon of July 3rd, when suddenly the firing ceased—not a gun was heard on either side. It was the calm after the severe storm; hostilities had ceased. The troops so long engaged in deadly combat could now stand erect and look across the disputed lines at each other with no deadly zipping of bullets hunting for victims. We felt like "shaking hands across the bloody chasm." Gen. Pemberton had displayed a white flag and asked for terms of capitulation which were arranged by Generals Grant and Pemberton at a meeting in the shade of a great live oak tree near Ft. Hill. At 9 o'clock July 4th, while flags were displayed along the enemy's lines, they marched out in front of their works, stacked arms and retired. Our troops took possession of their arms and fortifications. Meantime the gunboats were firing salutes for the great Fourth of July occasion. At last the long sought for and hard fought for prize had been won. Except the ever memorable event of 1776, it was the grandest Fourth of July recorded in our history.

Immediately after the surrender the 15th Army Corps had marching orders After all our long and bloody warfare we were not permitted to enter the city—there were other battles yet to fight, other enemies to conquer. Our artillery horses were quickly hitched, caissons moved out to our line of works and ammunition chests remounted. By noontime we were in line of march back toward Jackson, close upon the heels of Johnson's forces who were rapidly retreating in that direction to reach the cover of the strong fortifications now around that city. The day was hot. After a hard march we made our camp along the banks of a little creek that afforded us water. Heavy and threatening clouds heavily charged with lightning lay round in the west, so I prepared my house for a storm. I got two flat fence rails, laid them alongside each other and placed a flat piece of rail across one end for a pillow. With a blanket folded under me and a poncho, or gun blanket, over me from head to foot I slept while the rain fell in torents. And O such sweet restful slumber! Only a tired soldier could appreciate such luxury.

Two days' march brought us up against the fortifications at Jackson, where we had two weeks' hard fighting for the recapture of the city. During this time rations were scarce, so roasting ears figured largely in our bill of fare. About every two days forage wagons were sent out for green corn which was issued to horses and men, but we had no kick coming; we rather liked the change Our forces were gradually encircling the city with fortifications, so to prevent being caught in a trap, one night the enemy made a hasty retreat with our army in pursuit as far as Brandon, where they made a stand but after a sharp fight again retreated. Further pursuit was now abandoned. Our troops tore up several miles of railroad, then fell back to Jackson, and thence to Black River, about twelve miles from Vicksburg. Here Grant's army halted for a much needed rest.

The railroad had been repaired from Vicksburg and cars were running as far as Black River where our camps were located.

An enterprising sutler belonging to an Indiana regiment had got that far with a stock of goods and had them piled near the railroad. They consisted mostly of canned goods, and wine. We were hungry and tried to buy of his eatables, but he would not sell to any except his regiment which had not yet arrived, so the boys began to confiscate a few things they needed. The sutler called for protection guards with fixed bayonets, who were placed on duty. They did not see all that was doing, so more guards were needed and still business was lively—going at less than cost. At length Col. Taylor of the 26th Iowa took a musket in hand and placed himself on guard, but he could not watch both flanks and the rear all at the same time, and the other fellows always had a far-away look. My eye rested on a cheese about the size of a grindstone. The temptation was hard to resist, so while the brave colonel was occupied with other customers, I got busy. I got the cheese up in my arms against my stomach with my back to the audience and walked away. A big Irishman in order to help cover the retreat stepped beside me and together we wended our way to the camp. Our cheese was good.

Toward evening whilst I was busy fixing our tent and bunk, Wm. Watson, one of our mess, came hurriedly saying: "Sam, there are going to be furloughs granted." "Well," I said, "how about it." He said: "There will be five go out of our battery for thirty days; on their return, five more for thirty days." So I said: "I will go and apply for a furlough." "O no use! more than half the boys are ahead of you." "Well, I'll try for second batch." So I hied me to headquarters. The captain was busy writing and with a good deal of hesitation I said: "Captain, I learn there will be some furloughs granted; I would like to apply for second batch." Without lifting his eyes from his writing the captain replied: "The first is the surest." So the interview ended. I returned to my tent happy, but in doubt. Next morning I was called to headquarters. There were Elliot Frazier, Clint Olney, Isaac Stephens, Geo. Wilson, Samuel Black, our furloughs all

ready for us, with a little extra inscription across the face in red ink: "For meritorious conduct on the battle field." Our papers gave us 30 days leave of absence. Our captain in the goodness of his heart gave us ten days more on his own discretion, bless his ashes. O, but we were pleased! The next thing was to get money to pay our fare. Subsistence was furnished but no transportation. Not one of us had enough stuff to go on. By borrowing a little of most of the boys we got the money and were off for Vicksburg. We must go on steamboat to Cairo, Ill., and from there by railroad. Five per cent of Grant's army made a big excursion party. The boatmen thought to reap a harvest and were charging $15 cabin fare and $5 deck. But they soon found they had Gen. Grant to reckon with; he issued an order posted in all the transportation houses and boats, and all we need do was tender fare as per order, $5 cabin and $1.50 deck. So here again Grant demonstrated his care for the welfare of the soldier. We took passage on the boat "Imperial," carrying about one thousand Confederate prisoners. We got along all right with the boys in gray, and in due time happily surprised our friends at home.

CHAPTER XV.

BACK FROM FURLOUGH—ON THE MOVE

"EVERY sweet has its bitter" was never more applicable than in the case of being home on furlough. The golden hours flew all too rapidly. Soon must come the sad good-byes, much harder now than at the time of enlistment—then we went to the step of martial music, impelled by strong patriotic impulse which had never yet been tried in the terrible crucible of war. Secretary Seward had said the rebellion would not last one hundred days, so some of us were afraid we would not experience one battle. But alas, many battles had been fought and still the conflict raged. The sad good-byes had been said and our faces turned again toward the horrid scenes of war. We had appointed a place to meet so that all might return together. All were there except Isaac Stephens. He had got extension of time on the plea of sickness.

On our way down the Mississippi river our boat was grounded and stuck three days on a sand bar, which with the ten days our captain had given us made thirteen days over-time.

We arrived at Vicksburg on Sunday; there would be no train to Black River until the next morning, so now we had time to view the city and its formidable defenses. When our forces first invested the place Gen. Grant asked Gen. Pemberton to remove the women and children from danger. Pemberton's haughty reply was: "I will take care of noncombatants;" so they were shut up in the fortifications during the siege. There are deep cuts in the bluffs for the streets. Into these banks the people had dug pits or caves where they stayed during the bombardment.

When we arrived in camp, Capt. Griffith was gone on leave of absence, with Lieut. Williams in command. He informed us we were reported as deserters, being absent fourteen days time. Here was a pickle. The lieutenant said: "Boys frame up an excuse and I will report it to Gen.

Osterhause." We did not wish to involve Capt. Griffith in the trouble, so we said: "Tell the general we were stuck on a sand bar while coming down the river." The general said: "Ah! stuck on a sand bar; fourteen days on a sand bar—most remarkable case. Return 'em to duty, return 'em to duty." Returning to camp seemed almost like mixing with ghosts. The boys were nearly all sick, pale and emaciated. Two had died and others were yet very sick, my brother one of them. There was much sickness in all the camps, the water supply supposed to be the cause. Most of the camp duty now devolved upon us just returned from vacation, and right glad were we to relieve the boys of every burden we could.

It was not long until the 15th Army Corps commanded by Gen. Sherman received marching orders. We moved on board transports up the river to Memphis, Tenn., where we rested a few days; thence by railroad to Corinth, Miss.; halted there a short while, then marched to Iuka, Miss., where we rested for a short time partaking of the health-giving waters of Iuka Springs. It was now autum; the weather was ideal; the health of the army much improved. So far, since leaving Memphis, soldiering had been comparatively easy, with no enemy to molest or make us afraid.

From Iuka we marched to Cherokee, Ala. Here trouble began. One afternoon—the day was cloudy, a light drizzle of rain falling—the army, except those on picket, were resting in their tents, little dreaming of the close proximity of danger, when suddenly, Forest with his host of cavalry troopers swooped down upon us. At once drums were beating the long roll, bugles sounding boots and saddles. In a twinkling, our line of battle was formed and the fight was on. Soon, however, the enemy was driven back about two miles to a high ridge, where with a battery of long range guns commanding our approach, they made a stand. Our battery with its supports, under the fire of their guns, moved up within easy range and soon dislodged them. After a spirited pursuit

until near darkness, our forces moved back to camp. For several days this guerilla warfare was continued, until all was ready, when our army cut loose from its base of supplies on the Memphis & Charleston railroad, and started on its long and weary march to Chattanooga, Tenn.

The health of our boys was now good, except, a few men, unable to march, were sent to hospital at Memphis, my brother, R. M. Black, among them.

At Tuscumbia we had another fight with Forest and his cohorts where we whipped them to a finish. We crossed the Tennessee river near Florence, Ala., so most of our march was through Tennessee.

We could now pretty well comprehend the situation. The battle of Chickamauga had been fought; Rosecran's army beaten and shut up inside the fortifications at Chattanooga could not fight its way out. Gen. Grant was placed in command of the forces there and Sherman was hastening with the 15th Army Corps to his assistance.

It was now December; the nights were frosty and chill. Rations were short for man and beast. Many days our bread ration consisted of three crackers issued in the morning—we could eat them all at one meal, or three, as we chose. There were thousands of bushels of wild persimmons along our route—plenty for all and to spare. Only for that good fortune we would have been very hungry.

We crossed the Tennessee River again at Bridgeport, Alabama. Here was the base of supplies for Rosecran's army, everything from here must be hauled by wagon over a rough and mountainous road to the Federal lines in and about Chattanooga, a distance of forty or fifty miles. At one point this line of travel was within range of the enemy's guns on Lookout Mountain. From Bridgeport we made a continuous march of two days and nights without sleep or rest, only to feed our tired and hungry horses and boil some coffee. Our commissary stores were replenished at Bridgeport, so we had more crackers but no persimmons. Along this whole line of march from Bridgeport to Chattanooga, I am sure I make no mistake

when I say, if the dead bodies of horses and mules had been placed in line they would have lain touching all the way. In many places the poor brutes would stick in the mud, the harness be taken off and they were left to die where the wagons would run over them. We were in a sickening stench the entire way. The last night of our march as we were toiling our guns and caissons out of mud and over rocks, ourselves tired and chilled, we could see the enemy's picket fires burning on the top and side of Lookout Mountain. We almost envied them their comfort as they sat by their blazing logs, and perchance laughed at the Yanks' hard lot in the valley below. But "he who laughs last laughs best." The fortunes of war are fickle and cannot be clearly foretold.

At daylight we reached the place on the road between the river and the mountain within range of the enemy's guns. We could see them frowning upon us and expected any moment to be greeted with cannon's opening roar. Not a shot was fired as our long line of troops moved by. On reaching the Federal lines under Gen. Joe Hooker in front of Lookout Mountain, the First Division of the 15th Army Corps, commanded by Gen. Osterhause, was halted and placed in Hooker's command, to assist in the coming battle of Lookout Mountain, while Gen. Sherman with the other divisions pushed on to Tunnell Hill, all preparatory for the coming battle.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE "BATTLE ABOVE THE CLOUDS"

MENTION should have been made in the preceding chapter of the misfortune which occurred to Geo. Wilson and Geo. Dusenberry, two of our boys. Mounted on extra horses they strayed too far from our lines the morning we left Cherokee, Ala., and were captured by Forest's men. Geo. Dusenberry died in Libby Prison. Another occurrence of interest to myself was the fact that we crossed the Tennessee River a little way below Mussel Shoals where the troop to which my father belonged had crossed while on their march toward New Orleans during the War of 1812.

The night after reaching Gen. Hooker's lines our troops enjoyed a much needed rest. We breakfasted early and were ordered to our position for the oncoming battle. The low-hanging clouds at times obscured the mountain top. Our guns were hauled by hand with ropes to the top of a ridge facing the batteries on Lookout Mountain. The gun carriages were carefully leveled and prepared for action. During all this time of preparation it appeared as if the Rebel cannon could give us lots of trouble, but they only seemed to regard us with silent contempt. Occasionally a sharpshooter would take a whack at us from his place of hiding.

Gen. Hooker's headquarters was but a short distance to our right—my gun nearest to him. Gen. Butterfield, Hooker's chief of staff, handed me his field glass at the same time pointing out a line of Confederate breastworks along the foot of the mountain. He said he wanted those fellows shelled out of there so that our infantry could advance up the mountain. I could see them very distinctly as they lay muskets in hand calmly waiting the deadly onset which would give many a poor unoffending fellow his passport to eternity. Capt. Griffith ordered: "Black, commence firing; fire slow and steadily." My gun was to have the

first shot. I ordered it loaded with shell, with the fuse cut or timed for as near the distance as I could guess, then pointed the gun carefully and stepped aside to watch the effect of the shot. I gave the command to fire, but luckily the friction primer failed to ignite and the gun did not shoot. Gen. Hooker came hurriedly toward us, exclaiming: "Who ordered that gun fired." Capt. Griffith met him. I was near enough to hear their conversation. Said he: "The first gun fired is to be the signal for our whole line of artillery to open; we are not ready; my infantry are not all in position. We might have lost the engagement." Who was to blame for misconception of orders I never knew.

Soon a line of infantry was formed a few rods down the declivity in front of our guns, our shots to pass over them. Finally a big gun away to our left pealed forth its signal and the fight was on. Perhaps a hundred guns poured their concentric shot and shell into the ranks of the enemy along the foot of the mountain. The gunners on top of the mountain now began to sit up and take notice. A few shots were hurled at our battery which passed over us without damage. at length the Confederates were shelled out of their position, many of them retreating up the mountain and some coming to our lines as prisoners. At this juncture our whole line of infantry began a rapid advance. The First Division of the 15th Army Corps leading the charge. Our shots were now directed at the retreating Confederates until our lines were so far advanced as to be within danger of our missiles when our firing ceased except a few scattering shots. If we fired any shots at the guns on top of the mountain I don't remember it.

We were now in position to see a good portion of the fight. The mountain top was at times draped in fog or cloud, through which we could see dimly the cannon's fire which presented a scene of grandeur most sublime. At the top of the mountain is a perpendicular wall of rock in places perhaps fifty feet where men could not climb up, which made it difficult to dislodge the

enemy on the summit. At length our lines were so far advanced up the mountain the enemy could not depress their cannon so as to fire into our lines, so the artillery firing ceased. We could hear only the sullen roar of musketry which continued until dark, when both sides rested, holding their position. We too, slept by our guns.

Toward daylight we were aroused by musketry firing on the mountain; the Confederates were firing a parting salute. At early dawn it was discovered they had retreated leaving our forces in possession of their once stronghold. It has been disputed as to who led our forces in the charge up Lookout, the honors being divided between Gens. Osterhause and Geary. By observations from our viewpoint it seemed that honors were obout equal; our whole line appeared to advance simultaneously. None of our troops reached the top of the mountain until after the enemy retreated. One historian says: "Before 2 o'clock in the afternoon the Union flag was planted on the cloud capped summit of Lookout mountain, surrounded by exultant Federal troops, while the utterly routed Confederates were streaming in hot haste down the eastern slope and across the intervening hills and valleys toward Missionary Ridge." Josh Billings said: "What is the use of knowing so much that isn't so."

At early dawn our bugle sounded boots and saddles and soon we were on the march, without breakfast, toward Missionary Ridge. The Confederates in their flight had burned the bridge across Chickamauga creek which delayed us several hours. Meantime, we could hear the thunder of battle away to our left and see the smoke of the fierce conflict while the battle of Missionary Ridge was being fought. Across the creek our army moved with rapid tread toward the Confederate left flank posted on Missionary Ridge. We reached the scene of conflict just as the enemy was tottering to his fall. Our troops were not there in time to participate in the hard fighting, but captured several thousand prisoners. Long after sunset, tired and hungry—not having tasted food

since the evening before—we made camp on the battlefield. The upturned faces of the dead as they shone in the bright moonlight presented a gruesome picture. Searching a Confederate commissary we found a sack of shorts which was made into mush. We banqueted in quiet midnight revelry, rejoicing over our good fortune.

All the next day and the night following our battery lay in camp while the troops of our division pushed on after the fleeing Confederates, our horses being so worn we could not join in the rapid march. At Ringold, in a mountain pass, the enemy made a determined stand but were finally routed, the Fourth Iowa Infantry bearing the brunt of the fight and losing heavily, Charley Peck, who had been a detail in our battery several months, being among the killed. I remember Hooker was severely censured by officers and men of our division for an unnecessary sacrifice of men.

Of the many horrid sights of the battlefield I will not make mention. I noticed, however, one of our soldiers was shot dead as he reached the enemy's breastworks leaning against the embankment still grasping his musket in position of a bayonet charge. He had bravely fallen with his face to the foe.

Within a few short hours, the scene how changed: the storm of battle had swept over mountain and valley and many of the combatants lay commingled on the bloody field. On that eventful day, December 25th, 1863, while people were wont to celebrate the sweet Christmas carol of peace on earth good will to men, one of the fiercest battles of all time was being fought. The Confederates had received a stunning blow. The camp fires on the mountain had burnt out; the menacing guns on the heights were gone; the Federals were in peaceful possession. The once beleaguered city and the Union army could now enjoy an honorable repose.

After a short rest at Chattanooga the First Division of the 15th Army corps took up its line of march toward Woodville, Ala., following the same route, in part, which we had traveled coming hither.

CHAPTER XVII.

A VISIT TO NICAJACK CAVE

OF the preceding arduous campaign, now closed, let Gen. Sherman tell the story. I quote from his Memoirs, Official Report, Date of Dec. 19, at Bridgeport, Ala, Page 353:

"It will thus appear that we have been constantly in motion since our departure from the Big Black River in Mississippi until the present moment. I have been unable to receive from subordinate commanders the usual full detailed reports of events and have therefore been compelled to make up this report from my own personal memory; but as soon as possible subordinate reports will be received and duly forwarded. In receiving the facts I must do justice to the brave men of my command for the patience, cheerfulness, and courage which officers and men have displayed throughout, in the battle, on the march, and in camp. For long periods, without regular rations or supplies of any kind. They have marched through mud and over rocks, sometimes barefooted, without a murmur. Without a moment's rest after a march of over four hundred miles without sleep for three successive nights, we crossed the Tennessee, fought our part of the battle of Chattanooga, pursued the enemy out of Tennessee, and then turned more than a hundred and thirty miles north and compelled Longstreet to raise the siege of Knoxville, which gave so much anxiety to the whole country. It is hard to realize the importance of these events without recalling the memory of the general feeling which pervaded all minds at Chattanooga prior to our arrival. I cannot speak of the Fifteenth Army Corps without seeming vanity, but as I am no longer its commander, I assert that there is no better body of soldiers in America than it. I wish all to feel a just pride in its real honors."

In this connection I wish to say without wishing to indulge in the idle game of bragadocia,

that Gen. Butterfield after watching intently our firing at the battle of Lookout Mountain, complimented our battery very highly for our effective work, and added: "The First Iowa is one of the best batteries in the service, having more practice than any other." It will be noticed Gen. Sherman says in his report that his troops were three successive days and nights. This discrepancy can be reconciled in the fact as stated, that the First Division of the Fifteenth Army Corps were placed in Gen. Hooker's command, while that night Gen. Sherman pushed on and crossed the Tennessee river to get position for the battle.

During our return march we encamped and rested two nights and a day near Nicajack Cave, our camp being supplied with water from the beautiful creek coming out of the great cavern, said to be larger than the Mammoth cave in Kentucky. Having read of the wonders of the Mammoth Cave, I was very anxious to see some of nature's scenery of that kind. On our march to Chattanooga we had camped one night at the cave then. There were guards stationed at the entrance of the cave, so no one was permitted to enter. It was said two soldiers had gone in and never come out, so now there were soldiers guarding the cave.

Clint Olney and myself resolved to explore the hidden mysteries, so in the early morning we got permission from our captain for leave of absence and procured a pass from Gen. Osterhause to pass the guards.

No better soldier or more faithful comrade ever marched under the flag than Clint, so I felt all right as to my company. The undertaking was rather hazardous without a guide, but we would be careful to mark our way. Supplied with candles and matches we passed the guard. At the entrance was a small boat in which we rowed up stream, as we thought, about a mile, to where rocks had fallen into the water obstructing further navigation, so we pulled our boat fast upon the rocks and proceeded on foot, still up the creek to a point where the walls on either side pressed so near the channel

that we could not go farther without wading. Here we turned aside into a small opening which led to a large room, the ceiling ten or twelve feet above us. In this room we found many names written on the walls. Marking the entrance so as to find our way out, we looked for another passage leading to another room, and so on, from hallway to room, and from room to hallway in this vast underground castle not made with hands, carefully marking our trail so as to make our exit sure. Sometimes we would have to get on our hands and knees to get through a passageway leading to a large hall or room. We saw many strange and beautiful formations. Not being a geologist, I cannot give a scientific report. As none was required by our superior officers we did not make any attempt further than to say it was "awfully grand." We did not see any hobgoblins or find any dead soldiers. Once we put out our lights; the darkness seemed so dense we could almost feel it with our hands. When we would call aloud the voice did not sound natural. Finally concluding enough was as good as a feast, we retraced our steps and emerged from inner darkness into outer twilight. We had spent nearly a day in the subteraneous city.

At Bridgeport my brother, R. M. Black, reported for duty hale and hearty from the hospital at Memphis.

Resuming our march we reached Woodville, Ala., the last day of December, 1863, where we were to rest for a season. Our camp was located on the line of Memphis and Charleston R. R., in a beautiful valley in the Cumberland Mountains, where we had abundance of timber for fuel, good water in plenty, easy access to supplies and munitions of war; indeed, we were to have a real soldier's holiday. The first move was to get feed for our hungry horses. Eight or ten men were detailed to go with two mule teams in quest of corn, which we found in plenty, five or six miles from camp, standing in the field. Before we had picked our wagons full it began to rain so we returned to camp wet and cold, but with a goodly supply of corn.

That night the wind came sweeping down from the northwest blustering and cold—a storm period long remembered in the North as "the cold New Year Day" of 1864. Next on the program was to arrange our encampment, park the artillery, line up our tents, all in an orderly manner and prepare for such home comfort as camp life could afford. We were supplied with small wedge tents—one for three occupants. They were set in line, streets between, presenting the appearance of a village. Our camp was located at the foot of a mountain on the north, presenting a growth of fine timber—cedar, oak, ash and other varieties. Our tents being too low for comfort and convenience to remedy which fault Wm. Watson, R. M. Black and myself went on the mountain side, cut logs, drayed them down, built walls about five feet high and set our tent on top, in that way making plenty of room. Next we carried rock, of which we made a fireplace and chimney. Then we split ash logs into slabs, hewed them smooth, floored our house nicely, made bunks for sleeping, stools for seats and were soon prepared for real housekeeping. Cooking by our fireplace the old, old way seemed "mighty" good to us. No young man in the heyday of life ever worked more happily erecting a cabin or mansion for his betrothed than we on our little hut, only for a short abode, but it seemed again like treading the paths of peace, with a meager taste of the luxuries of home.

Most of the boys fashioned their houses in the same way. We also set little cedar trees in line in front of our tents which added real beauty to our environment. Flour was now being issued for our bread ration, so we must have a company bakery. W. F. Tate and myself were detailed to build an oven, which we constructed of brick, rock and mud, or mortar made of clay. John Gabeline did the baking act and we had good bread in plenty. The natives of the country would bring pies to exchange for our greenbacks which they were glad to get. We had daily mail and frequent letters from home. I subscribed for a daily paper so we could keep posted on the conduct of the war.

For fuel we would go up on the mountain and carry down dry cedar logs which were easy to chop. They burned brightly, emitted a pleasant odor and added luxury to our fireside. We could now luxuriate as "summer soldiers and sunshine patriots."

Captain Landgraver's battery was encamped nearby—the guns placed alongside of ours, forming a park of twelve guns, with infantry regiments composing the First Division located round about, so that frequent drumbeat and bugle calls continued to enliven the camp. One of the best buglers in the service was E. D. Ake of the First Iowa Battery—good natured and jolly, always ready for duty—but he made lots of bother for us, rallying to his calls. Camp duties, however, were light, so there was little cause for complaint and lots of time for play.

During the latter part of December Capt. Griffith went to Iowa on recruiting service and enrolled 93 men to fill our depleted ranks. A lone Alabama boy, also, John Anderson by name, came to our camp and wanted to enlist. He was accepted, mustered into service and made a good soldier. The arrival of our new recruits did not add to our leisure moments, as they must be trained in the arts of war, so we had several hours of drill each day. They were full of vim and vigor of manhood and were inclined to indulge in manly sports and exercise. As we did not care to join in their play, perhaps they thought us old soldiers a lazy lot.

Our camp was frequently annoyed by night attacks on our pickets—a kind of guerilla warfare waged by a scouting band of Confederates. One dark, rainy night I was on guard duty with orders to load one of our cannon and if I heard any picket firing to discharge the gun. About midnight a solitary sentinel fired his musket followed by a lot of shots in quick succession. Then the cannon shot; it seemed like I never heard such a loud report from any gun. In a moment the camp was in an uproar, drums beating the long roll, bugles calling boots and saddles. Soon our horses were hitched and away we went in search of an enemy. We did not find a bloodless vic-

tory over a false alarm.

During our stay at Woodville the grim reaper whose harvest is death, entered our camp claiming four of his victims, three of the new recruits and one of our lieutenants, J. M. Williams, who had been with us from the organization of the company and bravely borne his part. His work was well and faithfully done: "Furl the sail the voyage is done; drop the anchor, sets the sun."

The days flew swiftly by. Springtime with its birds and flowers had come; all nature seemd awakening into new life. Yet in contrast we must again go fourth in the dread wark of killing or being killed. About the middle of April our battery received marching orders, moved to Scottsboro, Ala., and joined the 4th Division of the 15th Army Corps, to which we had been transferred. From thence we moved to Chattanooga. The 15th Army Corps formed part of the Army of the Tennessee, commanded by Gen. McPherson; which with the Army of the Cumberland, commanded by Gen. Thomas; the Army of the Ohio, commanded by Gen. Schofield; and the 20th Army Corps, under Hooker composed the grand army all under the command of Gen. Sherman, soon to inaugurate the great campaign against Atlanta and the final "march to the sea." Opposed to the Federal forces was a strong and efficient army of Confederate veteran soldiers, commanded by Gen. Joseph E. Johnson, one of the best generals of the Confederacy.

This was to be a battle to the finish. Our battery was now newly equipped with ten-pounder rifle guns well manned. We had also a lot of new horses. The opposing forces met at Resacca, Ga., where the first great battle of the campaign was fought. The enemy was strongly intrenched; we must fight in the open. During the afternoon of May 13th our battery took position, supported with infantry, within easy range of the enemy's lines. As we preparing our guns for action, a cannon shot struck the ground nearby. Just then Gen. Logan was riding by in a fast gallop. Said he: "Give them hell boys, they are after you."

We were soon hotly engaged, firing steadily until dark. Next morning the fight was resumed. We soon put two of their guns out of business by dismounting them. With our new rifle guns we could shoot pretty accurately and soon had the boys in gray pretty badly demoralized. Our firing continued during the day at intervals. Next day the battle raged with fury. A portion of the enemy's lines were carried by storm. During the night they retreated leaving many of their dead upon the field.

During this battle Sargeant Spicer was mortally wounded and Clint Olney, gunner, slightly wounded. This was the first fight for most of our new recruits. They played their part well and would now pass for veteran soldiers. Dan J. DeLong and Geo. Cramer, both good soldiers, were of the new men, but had seen service in the First Iowa infantry, and fought in the battle of Wilson's Creek, where Gen. Lyon was killed while leading that regiment in a fierce charge.

In their flight the Confederates burned the bridge across Etowah River, which delayed pursuit for several days, giving them time at Dallas to fortify and prepare for another general engagement, where our troops formed in line of battle in front of them and intrenched their position. On the 28th of May our battery was ordered to take position on the crest of a ridge about one hundred yards in front of our line of infantry back behind the brow of the hill, so low they could not see the enemy. Capt. Griffith protested against placing the battery in such a hazardous position without any support. The chief of artillery of the division said if the First Iowa battery could not go there some other battery would. Griffith replied: "The First Iowa battery can go where any other battery can." So three of our guns were hauled up by hand, the position being so swept by the batteries and sharpshooters of Hardee's Corps our horses could not have lived ten minutes. Cannoneers could have some protection by lying flat upon the ground when not working the guns, of which there were three—my gun, Clint Olney's and I for-

get who was the other gunner, but Thomas Fitkin was the Sargeant in charge. My gun was three or four rods to the left of the other two with a clump of brush between us, partly hiding the other guns from view where Capt. Griffith was. In front was open timber. Our guns in position we opened fire. There were a few of our sharpshooters near us and they, too, were firing, so that I suppose the enemy thought it was our main line of battle and very weak, with a good opportunity to capture a Yankee battery. We had not fired many rounds until we heard the Reb. yell; Hardee's men were coming on a charge, doublequick. We poured cannister into their ranks as rapidly as we could fire, still on they came with steady step. I could see their cartridge boxes and belts as I sighted my gun, yet forward they moved. The situation was desperate. I looked for the other two guns; they were pulled back to our line of breastworks. I at once ordered our gun back, J. W. Mars and myself carrying the trail, the other boys at the wheels. In our hurry we run one wheel against a log. In desperation we tried, but were stalled. The Confederates had now reached the crest of the hill within sight and range of our infantry. At once a volley of shots burst forth from their muskets. We were now "between the devil and the deep sea." The man assisting me at the trail was shot and fell under the gun. I said, "Boys leave the gun and save yourselves if you can." Thinking the enemy would soon be repulsed, and to avoid the storm of balls from both sides, I threw myself into a skirmish pit beside a sharpshooter. In a moment I heard him utter a cry of despair. Looking up I beheld a Confederate officer, pistol in hand, standing over us. He had shot the man beside me. Quick as lightning I sprang to my feet. He said, "Pass to the rear; you are my prisoner." With a pretense of obeying his order, I stepped a pace or two back.

A rod or so away was the Confederate line of battle. I broke away and with all speed I possessed ran toward our lines and leaped over the breastworks. I am sure I never ran so fast before or since. An officer stand-

ing near said, "Battery have they got your gun." I replied: "I fear they have."

I saw Capt. Griffith a few rods to the right intently watching the fight. I said, "Captain I fear we have lost our gun. What shall I do?" He said: "Go back to the rear and help bring up the other three guns."

On my way an officer on horseback ordered me to halt and said, "Take hold of that stretcher," (which a member of the ambulance corps was dragging toward the front) "and help carry back the wounded." I replied: "I am acting under orders from my captain and cannot obey your order." Said he: "God damn you, obey my order or I will shoot you," and drew his pistol. Again I replied: "I will not do it." At that moment Lieut. Gay of our battery rode up. I said, "Lieutenant, this fellow orders me to carry wounded men off the field." He said, "Come with me," and we passed on, leaving the scoundrel in his self conceited glory. I still have a desire to meet the cowardly scab divested of his brief authority, not strutting under shoulder straps for protection.

We met the First Division of the 15th Army Corps, the Fourth Iowa, our old comrades, leading, rushing to the fray. Some of them greeted us saying, "Boys we will have your guns back." Our other three guns were also coming full gallop.

The Johnnies retreated leaving many of their dead upon the field, among them the captain who had shot the man beside me in the rifle pit. A bullet had passed through his head. One of our cannoneers, Harry Titus, claimed the honor of his killing with the sharpshooter's musket. I rather felt sorry for him as I gazed on his features, now peaceful in death. He was a brave man possessed of a magnanimous spirit, or he would have killed me as a foeman.

We placed our guns back in position, fired a few shots, without reply and the fight was ended. I cannot close the story of this battle without mention of one of our veterns that was killed while bravely facing the foe. He was the pet of the battery and had been with us from the first—our fine old brindle dog, Watch. One of our boys, George Ed-

wards, got him while at Burlington, Iowa. George was a noble-hearted, good boy, but I believe he stole that dog; anyway coaxed him into the service without the owner's consent. The fame of the eagle belonging to the 8th Wisconsin regiment has passed to history both in song and story; we have heard of Old Dog Tray; but nothing has been recorded of the faithful valor of our brave old dog Watch. When the Johnnies were charging our battery, Watch ran out in front of our gun barking and growling at them, doing his best to drive them back. I saw him in line of fire and knew he would be killed. The gun was loaded with cannister. Who could reckon the value of moments on such an occasion! It was our last shot; two or three balls pierced his body and the dog was dead. I still regret that shot was fired.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ATLANTA CAMPAIGN

THE Atlanta campaign was one of almost continuous fighting from Rocky Face Ridge to Atlanta. Nearly every day the thunder of cannon could be heard somewhere along our lines. There was no period of rest for the whole army, but constant marching and maneuvering on both sides for vantage ground and position, with frequent general engagements where most of the forces on both sides were involved.

After the battle on the 28th, our battery lay in our line of intrenchments in front of the enemy a day or two. One night about 10 o'clock we were ordered to move with other troops of our corps. We had proceeded but a short distance when heavy firing began along our lines, now partially evacuated. We were hurried back to our position about midnight We made another start shortly before daylight and reached the intrenchments held by Gen. Hooker's Corps at Burnt Hickory, where Hooker had been hotly engaged.

Hooker's troops were now moved leaving us to hold the position, so near the enemy their sharpshooters kept us on the alert. If a man showed himself above the breastworks he was a mark for bullets. An infantry soldier near us had been on picket duty. After having been relieved in the early morning he jumped over the breastworks, walked out a few paces, stood erect and fired his gun. He walked back and fell dead over the breastworks; the sharpshooters got him. It seemed like a case of deliberate suicide.

We kept gunny sacks stuffed with cotton in the embrasure in front of our cannon when not firing, to protect us from bullets. When we would remove them to fire we would be greeted by a shower of balls. I still remember it was not an enviable position, sighting the gun.

After a few days of desultory fighting the enemy evacuated his position and left our forces in

possession of Altoona mountains. He next took a formidable position embracing Kenesaw and Lost Mountains. Here our battery was held in reserve for several days, occupying a position where we could see much of the engagement. The enemy's batteries on Kenesaw Mountain appeared to have complete command of the situation. They would fire on our troops at intervals with seeming pleasure, with nothing to greatly disturb or make them afraid; as the Yankee artillery could not reach the top of the mountain.

Situated a few miles behind the mountain is the little city of Marietta. The citizens would drive to the mountain top in carriages to view the battle and look down on the Yanks below. At length our turn came. The battery was ordered to move by night with muffled guns. We were placed in position away in front of the Federal line of works; not, however, without support. We were in the open, and well we knew the day would bring "battle's magnificently stern array," so we worked as if for dear life building fortifications. By morning's dawn we were pretty well fixed.

As daylight peeped o'er the mountain east of us, we received a morning salute, then the command: "Cannoneers post; commence firing." In a moment a grand reveille was being proclaimed from top and base of mountain.

We were so near the mountain our line of fire was at an angle of elevation of about 45 degrees. Our guns would carry 6,200 yards, so we were within easy range. Most of the enemy's shots passed over us and did us little harm. Their fortifications were mostly of rock—a poor defense against percussion shells.

The fight was hot until about 10 o'clock when the Confederates ceased firing. We also rested. At 2 p. m., again with balls the sport began. It lasted for a few hours and then we rested for the day.

Next morn they opened their guns on us again. We fought them to a stand-still; they never troubled any more. We would at intervals fire a few shots for pastime; until the close of the battle our work was easy. In an

attempt to carry the enemy's position by assault the Federals were repulsed with heavy loss. Finally an advance in force toward the enemy's flank and rear, compelled him again to retreat.

As we passed through Marietta I picked up a paper giving an account of the siege of Kenesaw mountain, which stated: "For a while it seemed as if the Yankee artillery could not reach the top of the mountain, but later it was demonstrated they could throw their shot well over the mountain and into the city." That was after the Frst Iowa battery got into the game.

Near Nicajack creek our battery was in front of a heavy fortification flying the stars and bars. Capt. Griffith ordered me to shoot down their flag. The distance was about 1000 yards; I could see the flag staff but dimly. I tried my best and fired perhaps a dozen shots, but the flag still waved.

The confederate Army had been pushed back south of the Chattahoochee river. July 14th the 15th Army Corps commanded by Gen. Logan crossed this stream at Roswell, after which we lay in camp a few days then moved south near Decatur, east of Atlanta. The Army of Tennessee, composed of the 15th, 16th and 17th Army Corps with their respective commanders, Generals Logan, Dodge and Blair, under command of Gen. McPherson, forming the left wing of Sherman's Army; the Army of the Ohio under command of Gen. Schofield holding the center; the Army of the Cumberland under "Pap" Thomas forming the right wing and the whole line in the form of a half circle were closing in upon Atlanta.

On the afternoon of July 20th the enemy made a heavy and desperate assault on Gen. Hooker's 20th Corps in a vain attempt to break the Federal center, but were repulsed with heavy loss. Meantime the Army of the Tennessee was crowding the enemy's right. Our battery with the 4th division of the 15th Army Corps took position in front of the enemy strongly intrenched in a line of works looking east across an open field, they being in the edge of a wood. A battery which had preceded us was

moving out. The men were carrying some of their harness and pulling one gun by hand, having lost several horses and men by the enemy's artillery fire. They told us by way of encouragement we were going to the hottest place we were ever in. We passed one dying artilleryman, his thigh torn off by a cannon ball. His comrades were bidding him goodbye. I took his hand and he whispered, "Farewell;" he was dying bravely.

Our guns were soon placed in position in the edge of a small undergrowth of timber affording little protection. Being ready for business, as we thought, W. F. Tate, a gunner, and myself stepped forward of our guns so we could better see where to direct our shots, suddenly the enemy's artillery opened upon us. Their fire was very accurate, the first shot killing two of our men and severely wounding another. For about two hours we lay under their deadly fire, having no orders to reply. Finally their fury ceased, followed by scattering shots until dark. We never knew why we were not permitted to fire, but supposed we were there to repel an expected charge.

After midnight the order was: "Spades to the front," and then it was dig, dig the night through. On such occasions there are no shirking cannoneers; a pile of dirt in front and a hole in which to work the gun looks good.

The morning of the 21st dawned bright and clear, disclosing the fact to the Johnnies that the Yanks had not been sleeping. A line of fortifications extending far to right and left met their view. All was quiet—no shots to break the calm of nature, the foemen standing on the parapets gazing at each other, observing as if by mutual consent a kind of truce until after breakfast, before beginning the bloody work of establishing a Confederacy or preserving the Union.

All too soon a change comes o'er the scene. Not a soldier in sight, only the white smoke along the lines give proof they are still there. At times the battle raged with fury, but we were now on equal vantage ground, behind the dirt wall. About 10 o'clock a. m., the enemy daringly ran two pieces of artillery

out in the open to a point where they could enfilade a portion of our rifle pits. We could not train our guns upon them from our works, so three of our guns, Watson, Olney and Black, gunners, were hauled out a few rods in front of our breastworks, so as to reach them. For awhile we had hot work. The intruders were severely punished, their guns disabled and taken off the field. From our advanced position we could pour our shots with telling effect on a portion of the enemy's lines a few hundred yards to our left where our troops (the 17th Corps) were advancing. So for about three hours we remained in that exposed position the while doing terrible execution to the enemy.

Our guns were finally hauled back to our former position behind our breastworks, where we felt lots better and continued firing until night bade us rest.

The morning of July 22nd no enemy was visible in our front. They had retired to another line of works, nearer to the city. Our troops moved forward and occupied their abandoned position. The rumor was afloat that Atlanta was being evacuated, that our scouts had observed seventy stand of colors moving southward from the city. So until near noon we enjoyed the calm that preceeds the storm.

Instead of leaving Atlanta the Confederates were preparing to defend it in one of the fiercest conflicts of the war. By moving their forces to the intrenchments near the city, leaving a small force to hold them, they could mass a heavy force against any point or part of the Federal line and strike a determined blow.

Gen. Johnson had been relieved from duty and Gen. J. B. Hood placed in command of the Confederate forces. Hood's tactics were to fight regardless of cost. His plans seemed to be to strike the Federal army in the flank and roll it back upon itself, Stonewall-Jackson-like, and thus gain a signal victory. The army of the Tennessee would not subscribe to that kind of tactics. For some of us fighting was now a pretty serious business. We were near the expiration of our term of enlistment and could see dimly, home and friends once more, but of course must submit

to the inevitable.

In our new alignment, or position, the 4th Division of the 15th Corps joined the 17th Corps, its lines swinging to the southeast, in the edge of the wood along Proctor's creek. From our position on Leggets Hill, we had a pretty good view of the battlefield. About noon the firing began, at first scattering shots of musketry, which rapidly grew in volume, with a few cannon shot which spread along the 17th Corps.

Gen. Harrow and staff officers were near our battery eagerly surveying the field with their glasses. Lieut. Gay sent orders to bring up our caissons which were some distance in the rear. "Yes," said Gen. Harrow, "bring forward your caissons, we will all go to h—l together." Just at that moment Gen. McPherson rode by in full gallop, several rods ahead of his staff officers. It was his last ride; a few moments later his body was pierced with bullets. He had ridden through a gap in the lines between the 15th and 17th Corps, and into the enemy's skirmish line. His body was quickly recovered.

Matters now began to look critical. The enemy had struck the 17th Corps in front and flank and was rapidly pressing it back. The onset was terrible. Blair's Corps was in confusion, most of his artillery captured. The surprise was so complete, stragglers came rushing back by hundreds. For a time it looked more like a rout than a battle. The 16th Corps was moving rapidly forward to the rescue and soon became hotly engaged with the charging columns of the enemy. Our battery and two or three regiments of the 4th Division were also wheeled into line in front of the enemy, now pressing close to our position. Just as we were ready to open fire, two of Blair's caissons came flying back through our lines. While in our midst, one of their ammunition chests exploded, adding to the confusion. We began firing. Soon the charging columns of the enemy appeared in front; one regiment far in advance, moved cool and deliberate, reserving its fire. We thought they were coming to surrender, but when about fifty yards distant they fired a

volley, then flankers from our line rushed around in their rear and captured every man of them.

We were now hotly engaged. Meantime the 17th Corps had rallied and was fighting with desperation, while the 16th Corps on our extreme left was standing in line in open field, firm as the hills on which they stood, dealing death and destruction to the enemy as they made repeated charges in their desperate efforts to break their ranks. "The combat deepens, on ye brave!"

The storm was soon to burst upon us from another direction. Cheatham's Corps was bearing down upon us from toward Atlanta. Already our skirmishers had been driven back. We were hurried to our position in line facing Cheatham's veterans. Soon the gray columns of the enemy appeared in the open woods.

Suddenly a blaze of fire and smoke streamed forth from our lines. The fighting was terrific. The heavy artillery in the forts near the city joined in the melee. The whole Army of the Tennessee was now engaged. The enemy displaying determined valor, advanced their line to a position about seventy-five yards in our front where they halted behind a little natnsal embankment for protection, while they continued a rapid fire. At this juncture, Col. Greathouse's regiment, Illinois men, armed with seven-shooters (repeating rifles), perfomed a feat of daring seldom equaled. They sprang over their rifle pits and ran forward to the ridge where the enemy lay, and with their rapid fire guns poured a storm of shot upon them, driving them back from their position, then retired to their place in our lines. Soon, however, the enemy advanced to the same sheltered position. Again Col. Greathouse's men drove them back, and again resumed their place supporting our battery on the left. Three times this act in the bloody drama was repeated.

Meantime our guns were not silent. Our cannister and case shot exhausted, we were firing solid shot with which we could not do much execution, but could maintain a bold front until more ammuniton was brought forward. After several hours of hard fighting, our line away to our right was broken. The enemy swept

through a deep railroad cut near the right of the 2nd division, captured two guns of Capt. DeGrass' battery and turned them so as to sweep our lines toward our position. Soon the whole of the 2nd division gave way. The regiment supporting our battery on the right was driven back, the enemy planting their colors on the rifle pit about six rods from our battery, leaving only the First Iowa Battery and Col. Greathouse's regiment of our line standing. The regiment supporting our battery on the right rallied, charged and retook their position. Again the line to our right gave way; the enemy were gaining our rear. To save our guns we must retreat. We pulled the carriages back a few rods by hand and limbered up just as our drivers started. Frank Fox on the swing team was shot and fell from his horse. Sargeant Antrobus told me to mount and drive his team. Just then I remembered I left the trail handspike belonging to my gun, so I went back and got it—a hazardous job—but I could not lose any part of my gun. Antrobus was a good soldier, but he walked and led the team. Col. Greathouse with his regiment covered our retreat, and was killed while bravely performing his duty.

The enemy did not follow us but remained in the works we had left—the same position in which they had fought the day previous. In our retreat I had fallen behind the battery and was so tired I could not run to catch up. Near the creek I saw one of our boys, Sargeant Fitkins, lying down. He had not been well for some days and was exhausted. He called to me to stop with him and let them take us prisoners. I said, "No, I believe I can get up the hill."

Our troops had halted at our line of works of the day before. Gen. Harrow with his staff was near our battery. Gen. Logan, who had taken command in McPherson's place, approached on a fast gallop. Said he, "Harrow what in h—l does this mean?" Harrow told him in few words how the 2nd Division's lines were broken and he had fallen to keep the enemy from getting in his rear. Gen. Logan said: "Those works must be retaken

or the Army of the Tennessee is gone to h—l. They must be retaken!" He ordered every battery to take position and shell the enemy furiously for thirty minutes, after which a general charge should be made. The 16th and 17th Corps were still stubbornly holding their positions. Soon all of our batteries were in position and thundering at the foe. Then our columns moved forward on a charge irresistible. It was now growing dark—the day was done, the victory won.

By order of Capt. Griffith, our artificers, Charley Hough and Wm. Dilts, made a coffin for Col. Greathouse, in recognition of service rendered in protection of our battery.

Our battery lost some brave boys whose time of enlistment had nearly expired. They were nearing home and friends, but such was the stern decree of war. Who would be the next to follow?

Three or four days our troops lay quietly on the battlefield, the enemy making no demonstration in our front.

While walking over the bloody field I noticed beside a dead Confederate soldier, about a dozen small potatoes which had been pulled from his haversack, I suppose by some hungry soldier in quest of a crust of bread. They were besmeared with blood. I picked them up, contemplating the gustatory pleasure of my evening meal. I began to moralize, "had the blood penetrated the potatoes." I was not quite hungry enough for an act so related to cannibalism and threw them away.

The restless and incautious Gen. Hood was soon ready for another man killing. He was massing his forces in front of the Federal right for another assault. On the night of the 27th, the 15th Army Corps moved in the rear of our lines to the right, taking position for battle in thick woods with an open field in front, across which the enemy must advance to reach our lines. The enemy's line of battle was also in the woods on the opposite side of the open field. During this engagement the First Iowa Battery was held in reserve, ready to rush forward at any critical moment.

About midday the fight began.

It was Hood's last supreme effort to beat the Federals in open field. The Confederates fought with a reckless daring never before surpassed. Seven times they charged across the open field in face of a withering fire which rapidly thinned their ranks. After each repulse they would fall back to the woods, reform their lines and come again as if with a determination never to yield. In the last act of the terrible tragedy a Texas regiment almost reached our lines. The color sargeant fell within a few feet of our men. He was buried where he fell by our boys, with a board marking the spot and bearing the inscription of his name, regiment and deed of valor. Finally the Confederates were driven back dismayed, leaving our troops master of the field, the enemy not even asking for a truce to bury his dead, which thickly encumbered the field.

It almost seems a mystery that more men are not killed in battle where bullets fly thick and fast, a veritable leaden storm of death. In some places where the battle raged fiercest, the brush was cut and bruised—much of it mown down. I cut a little hickory stick to carry home as a relic to my father for a walking cane or staff, the same marked with eighteen bullet battle scars.

After the battle the Confederates retired within their fortifications around Atlanta, leaving our troops to bury their dead, which was done in a slighting manner. The bodies were placed in rows on top of the ground with a light covering of dirt, which was soon washed and settled by a heavy rain, leaving a gruesome and horrid sight.

Our battery moved to a line of intrenchments near the enemy where the fight continued.

The time of the end of our enlistment was drawing near. How anxiously we counted the days. Would we be permitted to go before Atlanta was taken? was a question of deep concern and doubt to us.

Here the story of our last ration of beef must be told. While in the ditches, beef animals were delivered on foot and men detailed to do the butcher act. An animal was driven near our breastworks for slaughter, when suddenly it took fright, jumped

over the ditch and ran toward the enemy. Where it led we dared not follow, so with feelings of chagrin we watched our rations go to the enemy's lines and over the breastworks, amid the glad shouts and jeers of the Johnnies. They got our meat.

About 4 o'clock p. m., July 10th, 1864, the order came relieving us from duty. This order, however, only applied to the boys of the first enlistment. For us the hour of jubilee had come. Return you war-worn soldiers home.

With joy and gladness we were soon ready to obey our last marching orders. About sundown we started bidding a last and sorrowful good bye to many of the brave comrades we were leaving in the trenches, with the old battle smoked guns whose thunder tones we had heard on so many dreadful occasions.

We had an all-night march. In the gray of dawn we crossed the Chattahoochee river and rested near the railroad. About ten o'clock we started in a box car speeding away from the scenes of war, the thunder of battle still sounding in our ears, which grew fainter and fainter and was finally heard no more.

In due time we arrived in Davenport, Iowa, where we were mustered out of service, in the twilight—a band of ragamuffins, battle begrimed, as I remember, forty-seven in number left of the one hundred and forty-two men of the first enlistment in 1861. Seven or eight, however, reenlisted.

We met Adjutant Gen. Baker, who said in surprise: "Griffith where in h—l are you from?" The captain replied, "From the ditches near Atlanta. I came home for muster out." Said Baker: "Send your men to the barracks and you come with me." We protested that we were done soldiering, so we went to the Virginia Hotel in a body and remained there until discharged, when we received our final payment.

We paid hotel bills, dressed ourselves in citizen's apparel and felt like men once more. No more bugle call to arms. We had fought a good fight and done our part, now came the hour of valedictions. The parting, how sad!—a band of war-worn broth-

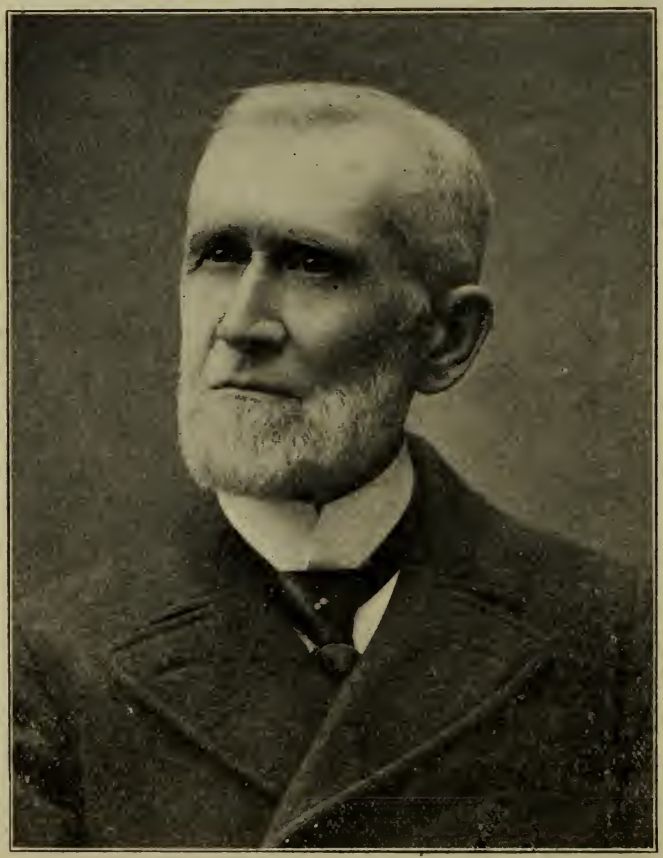
ers telling the last farewell.

Our home coming was not an unmixed joy; the images of fallen comrades stirred our memory. We thought of the broken home circle, the vacant chair, the tear dimmed eyes of stricken homes ever sorrowing for friends they should meet no more.

THE END.

"On Fame's eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread,
While Glory guards with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead."

"Earth's winters may whiten their snow-covered graves,
The Storm King may howl and the winter winds rave.
War's tocsin of discord may startle the land,
The flame of destruction more fiercely expand;
Undisturbed and unheeding life's pleasures or woes,
In their last dreamless sleep let those dear ones repose.
Where songs of peace or battle's roar,
Shall ne'er disturb their slumbers more."



WILLIAM H. GAY

MUSTERED IN AS QUARTERMASTER SARGEANT; LATER PROMOTED TO LIEUT. QUARTERMASTER; COMMISSIONED CAPTAIN AFTER CAPTAIN GRIFFITHS' MUSTER OUT IN 1864

Some Reminiscences of the Civil War

BY WM. A. GAY

FROM APRIL 1862 TO AUGUST 17, 1864

The coming of Capt. Henry H. Griffiths into the First Iowa Battery filled me, at the time, with amazement and apprehension. The battle of Pea Ridge had been fought and won, and the Battery under the eye of Col. Granville M. Dodge of the 4th Iowa Infantry, and commanding our Brigade, had done creditable and efficient work, to a degree that it called forth his approval and praise.

Capt. Junius A. Jones had resigned because of his incompetency. Lieut. Virgil Davids had sought and found a more congenial position as ordinance officer on the staff of Gen. Curtis. Orin Gamber, who was severely wounded at Pea Ridge, had gone home on sick leave, so that Lieut. James M. Williams, and Abram Harbach were the only commissioned officers left to serve the Battery. Lieut. Williams had no qualifications for the command and Lieut. Harbach had no inclination or taste or knowledge of the duties of a Battery Commander, and so we were drifting helplessly without a head.

One day a battery drill was called and this brought out the utter incapacity of Lieut. Williams to handle the Battery in drill, and Gen. Carr at once detailed First Lieut. Geo. P. Brown of the 13th Illinois Infantry to take temporary command. Brown was a bright, clever young officer and afterwards became Captain of Company B in the 13th Illinois Infantry. The rounding up of this incident was terribly humiliating to the spirited men of the Battery. There was angry talk and the situation came near to insubordination.

While these events were transpiring, a deeper and more significant plot was brewing, which was to have an unforseen and im-

portant influence upon the future status of the Battery. The 4th Iowa Infantry was the central figure of this plot. The battle of Pea Ridge developed the high military ability of Col. Dodge, and he was made a Brigadier General. This left the 4th Iowa without a competent field officer. Lieut. Col. John Galligan had found himself without qualification for the command and resigned April 3, 1862. Maj. Wm. R. English was on staff duty and did not aspire for the place. Henry H. Griffiths of Company E. was the ranking Captain of the Regiment and was the logical candidate for Galligan's place, and as he was a brave, competent officer he should have been made Lieut. Colonel without question. But here politics came in to subvert individual rights of promotion and the will of the Regiment. Lieut. James A. Williamson, Adjutant of the Regiment, was an aspirant for the place and made an energetic "pull" for getting it. Williamson was a politician. He had no military qualifications by education or natural bent of mind. But he had some political strategy and had been a worker in that line. In this way he managed to get the ear of Gov. Kirkwood and was persuasive enough to convince the Governor that he was THE one to fill Galligan's place and was commissioned Lieut. Colonel of the 4th Iowa Infantry and finally became Colonel, May 1st, 1862, and later a Brigadier General. This was so clearly an overriding of earned merit and military usage in the volunteer service that Capt. Griffiths was aroused to a high pitch of indignation, and he at once applied for and received leave of absence. He went to Des Moines and laid the matter before Gov. Kirkwood, demanding that his rights be respected. But the Governor would not or could not undo what had been done. The Captain then told him that he would not serve under Williamson, that he did not want to leave the service, but wanted a place somewhere in active service. It was then that the Governor called to his attention the vacancy in the Captaincy of the First Iowa Battery, and that he could have it if he would take it. And so facing great wrong, he finally accepted, and was commissioned May 16th, 1862. He joined the Battery June 9th, 1862, while in camp at Batesville, Ark., under Special Order No. 4 from Headquarters of Second Division of the Army, Gen. Carr Commanding.

The day that Capt. Griffiths reported to the Battery was one of overshadowing interest to the men. Up to this time, we had had practically no worthy leadership, and added to this, the manner in which this important change was thrust upon us, stirred up a feeling of great resentment. The situation was very trying to me. I was full of wrath and feelings of insubordination. I felt that our brave men had suffered an unnecessary humiliation, that the good of the service had been surrendered to selfish ambitions, leaving us without voice or choice in the matter. I was not in the Battery camp when Capt. Griffiths reported for duty. On my return he sent for me to come to his quarters. I reported at once, and we had a long interview, in which he gave me a full history of how he came to the Battery. He said that he could not remain longer with the Fourth Iowa Infantry after being despoiled of his rights by political trickery; that he accepted the command of the battery, so that he might remain in the service. It did not occur to him at the time he accepted the place how the men might feel about it; and not till the day that he joined had he given any thought as to how his coming might be received; and a feeling of dread came over him. I told him frankly how I felt about it, and that the spirited men of the company resented this outside interference in a matter so vital to their interests; that there were men in the company, not then holding commissions, perfectly competent for the command and they deeply felt the stinging humiliation of the situation. But as it seemed clear that there was no remedy within reach, I, for one, should bow to the inevitable, if he would bring life and efficiency out of the chaos we were in, and I thought every man in the Battery would do the same. Much more was said, and he seemed pleased with our interview, and said that he could understand our feelings, and did appreciate it and then said "I shall use my best efforts to bring the Battery to a place in the service of which all may be proud."

When I left him, I felt much impressed with the fire and courage there seemed to be in him, and decided to give him all the support in my power. In fact, I went back to my quarters with a strong belief in his capacity and sincerity. Subsequent events es-

tablished my convictions and we became fast friends, which was maintained unbroken until his death, long after the war.

Soon after Capt. Griffiths took command it became evident that we had a competent and judicious commander. He at once began to reorganize the personnel of the Battery. The chiefs of sections and detachments, and the gunners, as he found them, were put into the exercise of their respective duties, whenever time and place admitted of it. In the nature of things this work brought out the necessity of changes. The captain was determined to make the Battery as efficient as possible, and he did not hesitate to use the best material he had. So that when we left Helena, Ark., on the Vicksburg Campaign, Lieut. James M. Williams had command of the right section, Sargt. Amasa S. Curtiss the left, and Sargt. William H. Gay the center. The sargeants of detachments were: Thomas A. Ijams, Daniel M. Parks and Wm. M. Van Zant, appointment dating from muster-in of company, Aug. 17, 1861, and James Elting, appointed July 1, 1862, William R. Lebert, appointed, Aug. 1. 1862, and Levi Amos, appointed Sept. 1, 1862. The corporals—gunners—were: R. J. Bell, Samuel Black, A. C. Beckwith, John A. Alexander and John K. Gabby, appointed at time of company's muster, Aug. 17, 1861, and Clinton B. Olney, appointed Feb. 24, 1862. I take these names, not from memory, but as shown by the records of the Battery.

But to return to our situation at Batesville. There had been a condition of uncertainty all around, and the movements we had made accomplished nothing. The movement on Little Rock, Ark., was abandoned, for our army had been greatly reduced by the pressing necessities in Tennessee. Our situation was becoming somewhat serious. The enemy was assuming greater activity. Alarm for the safety of our army was felt and a relief expedition of men and gunboats was started for our rescue. But while it failed to reach us, it no doubt had the effect to better the situation.

Gen. Curtis now determined to abandon Batesville and reach the Mississippi river if possible, and on the 24th of June broke camp and started on this memorable march. All communications were now cut off, and the country was our sole dependance for supplies. Days of marching and hunger and thirst were ours to

meet. The heat at times was intense, and our suffering was great, which taxed the endurance of the most rugged soldier. Our hope was to reach Clarendon, when we expected to find an ample supply of stores. Day after day we struggled on, pestered on all sides by the ubiquitous rebel bushwhacker, "stabbing" wherever chance offered opportunity. We reached Clarendon about July 10, but the supplies we had hoped for were not there. Col. Fitch had been there with them, but being unable to learn anything of Curtis, he returned to the Mississippi River. There was now nothing to do but to get to the river as soon as possible. His orders were to make Helena in three days. This we did under a scorching sun, with short rations and no fit water to drink. The situation was grave—the Rebels on both flanks and rear picking off our men who got away too far from our column. Sometimes it looked as though we might have a battle. We had no way of communicating with the outside world, and it was reported that our army had met with a terrible defeat. This was really believed at Helena and when the head of our column, which was Carr's Division, touched the outskirts of the town, July 14, 1862, the astonishment of the "natives" was complete. We were a sorry looking "lot" when we entered Helena, hungry, weary and worn, but this was soon forgotten in the abundance of comforting necessaries, which were now in our possession.

The march from Cassville to Helena will never be effaced from the memory of the old soldiers who made it. It was freighted too full of the tremenduous offerings of human effort, too well lined with obstacles overcome and too weighty with the burden of a desperate undertaken to be forgotten.

Incidents in the History of the First Iowa Battery

BY W. F. CONNER

In the month of April, 1863, the First Iowa Battery was lying at Millikens Bend, Louisiana, a few miles above Vicksburg. The Battery was assigned to the fifteenth army corps, General Steele's division. About this time the fifteenth corps under its commander, General Sherman was sent up the Yazoo river on an expedition, which was made for the purpose of a "demonstration" to attract the attention of the enemy from an important move, that General Grant had in contemplation. The object of General Grant was to capture, destroy, and break up the Rebel stronghold at Vicksburg, and open up the Mississippi river for traffic through to New Orleans, where the Union forces were already in possession. Our army having failed in its numerous attempts to effect a landing on the highland in Mississippi above Vicksburg, Grant conceived the brilliant idea of marching his army across the big bend in the Mississippi through Louisiana and cross over to the Mississippi side at a point below Grand Gulf, a strongly fortified position held by the enemy a few miles below Vicksburg. This was successfully accomplished on April 30, after a march of about forty miles through swamps, bayous, and what seemed to be an impossible route, for at least half of that distance had to be either corduroyed or pontooned. Grant's army readily overcame these seeming impossible obstacles. Along this march thousands of soldiers could be seen daily cutting down trees, carrying rails and every conceivable material for making a road on which the wagons and artillery could be moved.

Grant's army at this time numbered 41,000 of all branches of service. While he had opposed to him in Mississippi, an army of

about 57,000 of all arms, under the command of the ablest generals in the Confederate army. These forces were located in easy supporting distances, being at Grand Gulf, Vicksburg, Jackson and Canton. General Grant in this campaign, exhibited a degree of generalship never excelled in the world's history, and made for himself a reputation in the military world such as no other general has ever equaled. With his little army, he separated, fought, and defeated the enemy with all the forces they could bring together against him, at Port Gibson, Raymond, Jackson, Champion Hills, and Black River, and on the 16th day of May, drove Lieutenant General Pemberton into his stronghold at Vicksburg, besieging the place which finally surrendered to him on July 4th, with 31,000 prisoners and all the materials of war, consisting of heavy ordinance, such as mortars, siege guns, light artillery, wagons and 35-000 stands of small arms besides an immense quanity of ammunition.

The First Iowa Battery took no small part in this campaign. It was the first battery to cross the Mississippi river on April 30th, below Grand Gulf. It was in the evening of that day, about 4:00 o'clock, and almost immediately after the landing was made, one gun, the left howitzer, under Sergeant William R. Lebert, was detailed along with two companies of the Twenty First Iowa Infantry to lead the advance to Port Gibson, and initial start toward the capture of Vicksburg, was made.

This advance was made under the immediate command of Colonel Stone, of the Twenty First Iowa Infantry. The two companies of infantry were deployed as skirmishers in the advance under a guide. About 11:00 o'clock at night, we ran into the outpost of the enemy, at or near Magnolia church, and three or four miles from Port Gibson. We drove the enemy's pickets in rapidly to within point-blank range of their main force, which we found to be under General Bowen and division of Missouri and Arkansas Confederates, with whom we had successfully tried issues on several occasions before. They were in a naturally strong position. Here we opened on them with a howitzer, a little after mid-night. It was a clear night, but no moon. We could distinctly hear the commands given by the Confederate officers; we were so close to the enemy that they thinking we were on a hill, half a mile backof

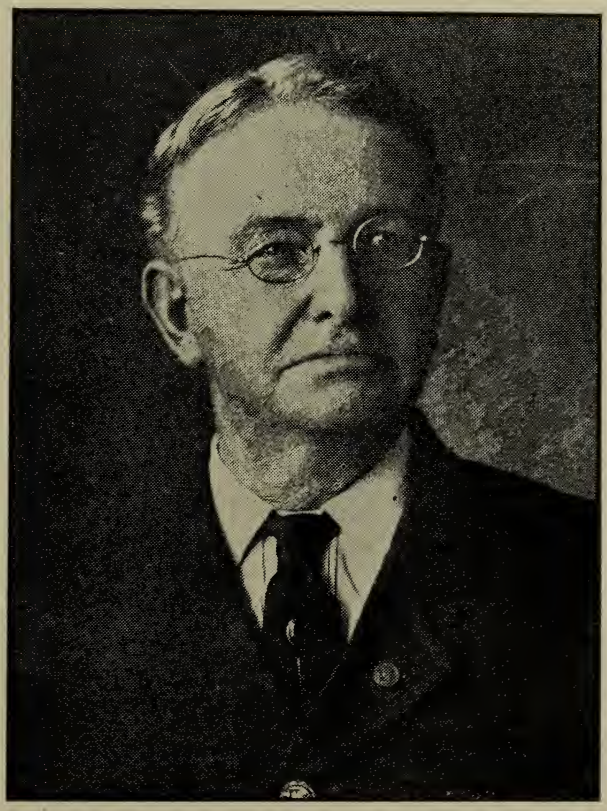
our position, overshot us. We held this position until our ammunition was exhausted, and about 5:00 o'clock in the morning the rest of our division, and Logan's Division of the thirteenth corps, came up and commenced the fighting most vigorously, some of their shots being directed at us, as we were lying immediately between the two contending armies. About this time our gallant Sergeant, Wm. R. Lebert, was most dangerously wounded by a fragment of a bursting shell, which passed entirely through his neck. He was carried off the field and reported dead, but fortunately and miraculously, recovered sufficiently to return to duty sometime before the surrender of Vicksburg.

A few days before the army started from Milliken's Bend, and while the fifteenth army corps was on the expedition up the Yazoo river, General McClernand, who was in command of the thirteenth army corps, and being a little short of light artillery succeeded in having the First Iowa Battery transferred to General Carr's division of the thirteenth corps.

Three or four days after the Battle of Port Gibson, and while on the march to Jackson, Mississippi, near Raymond, Mississippi, General Steele, who had been very angry at General McClernand for taking advantage of his (General Steele's) absence, and having as General Steele termed it, stolen our battery from him, succeeded in having the battery returned to his division of the fifteenth corps.

On October 14th, 1863, the Battery left its camp at Black River Bridge, twelve miles in the rear of Vicksburg, where they had been located since the 19th of July, guarding that point. At this camp the battery experienced an unusual amount of sickness, and we lost several members by death. It was one of the most unhealthy locations that it was ever our misfortune to be camped in. Among those who died at Black River Bridge, was my old personal friend and companion, Tom Davis, with whom I had been personally aquainted since early childhood, and who was my bunk-mate at the time of his death. He was a universal favorite with the entire battery, and was one of the best and bravest soldiers that I ever knew.

We went to Vicksburg, and from there by steamer directly to



W. F. CONNER

PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDER G. A. R., STATE OF TEXAS

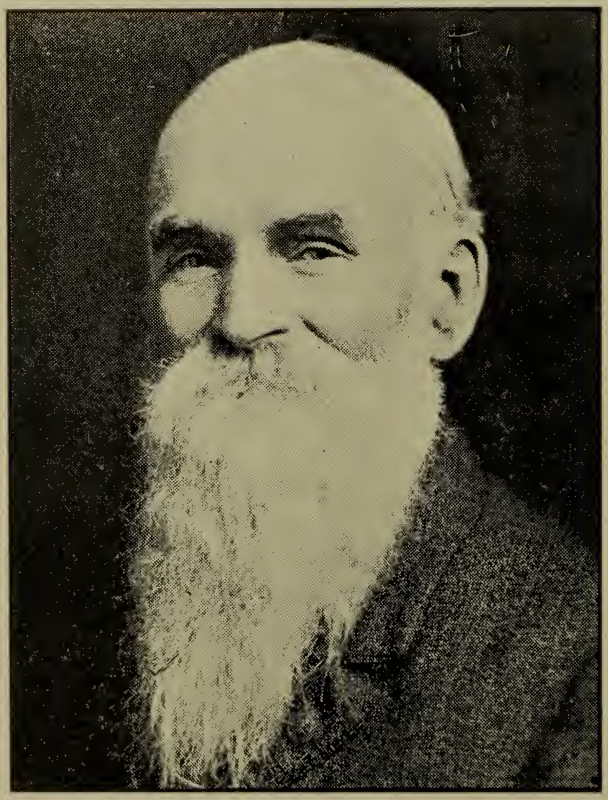
Memphis, Tennessee, thence started directly across the country to the relief of General Thomas at Chattanooga. About October 20th, we had stopped at a little place called Cherokee, in Alabama, to rest up, and do a little foraging. The writer of this was detailed for this purpose. With four wagons and eight or ten of our company we left camp about 9:00 o'clock in the morning. When about eight miles from camp after having filled our wagons with forage of all kinds, consisting of fodder, corn, sweet potatoes, and not a few chickens, turkeys, and hogs, we were on the point of starting back to camp, when we heard the familiar sound of the cannon's boom and the sharp crack of musketry in the direction of our camp. Upon looking in that direction, we were not a little surprised and considerably scared, to see a company of the enemy's cavalry about three-quarters of a mile distant and between us and our camp. We had along with us as guards, about twenty-five or thirty infantrymen from the different regiments in our brigade. They proved to be of the right sort, and seemed to understand what was required of them. They immediately proceeded to load their guns, some of them having the Henry rifles. They quickly deployed and made directly for the Rebel cavalry, who no doubt thought we had a larger force in reserve and moved away very rapidly. When we arrived at the place where they had been, we could see only the rear of their party disappearing in the woods a mile or two away. It is needless to say that we made all haste to get back to our camp; where we found everything in a state of confusion. It seemed that some of Forrest's cavalry, who had captured a supply train of the Union army a day or so before, had clothed themselves in our blue United States overcoats, and by this means had been able to surprise our pickets and attempted to rush the Division, which was under the command of General P. J. Osterhause. At the time of the attack, the soldiers of the Division were attending to their usual camp duties, some of them in swimming, some doing their washing and others lying around in their tents, but a line was formed quickly and the attack repulsed. It was noticed that many of our infantrymen were in line bare headed, bare footed, clothed only in their ordinary underclothing. The casualties were not many, but here Colonel Torrence, of the Thirtieth Iowa

infantry lost his life in an endeavor to keep his men from shooting what he supposed to be Union cavalrymen. On this foraging expedition, two of our comrades, who had strayed too far away, were made prisoners. They were George Wilson and George Dusenberry. They never returned to the Battery. Dusenberry, died in the Rebel prison, while Wilson was not released until the close of the war. He returned home a physical wreck, suffering from scurvy, caused from lack of food. He lived until a few years ago at Rushville, Indiana.

The writer of these articles begs his comrades to overlook any in-accuracies, as he has written this entirely from memory, without referring to memorandas or history.

Your old comrade,

W. F. CONNER.



R. M. BLACK

Echoes of the Past

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CIVIL WAR BY A MEMBER OF THE FIRST IOWA BATTERY

R. M. BLACK

ASKED to contribute something to a write up of the 1st Iowa Battery, I must confess, first in order, that I approach the subject with "fear and trembling." All the old Comrades into whose hands this may chance to fall know that historical writing is not in my line—"hence these tears." The few thots that I shall try to outline must be of incidents and happenings in which I was immediately concerned, for the very good reason, that with me, as with a large majority of the Boys in Blue who made history in the early Sixties, unless I was one of the principal actors, events, many of them of more or less importance, have vanished beyond recall.

As a starter I will here tell what happened to me at Dug Spring. It was while The Army of the Southwest under General Curtis was chasing Sterling Price out of Missouri that the army was to camp at Dug Spring, and did so. But somebody made a mistake and our Battery marched right on thru the camps with their bright blazing fires and on out to the advanced outpost where we found we were up against it, so to speak. Well, we were halted there for it seemed to me a long time. It was now long afer dark, freezing cold and a strong gale was blowing. We crowded around a big camp fire, I in the crowd standing with my back to the fire when I suddenly felt the heat. It did not take much investigation to make the discovery that all the back part of my trouser legs from the knees down were burned away. Well I was in a sure enough fix. But it would have been far worse than it proved to be had not Corporal Lebert loaned me a pair of rubber leggins which I wore for about two weeks or more before there was any chance to draw clothing.

It's an old saying that "fortune favors the brave." I can't

lay any claim to being in line there, but was often in luck when parties were sent out on a scout. I was in the section of the Battery that was sent up the St. Francis river after cotton sometime in October, I think, in '62. The expedition traveled westward over those rolling hills to the level country along their western slope, thence northward several miles, turned eastward thru a gap in the hills and came out into the valley of the St. Francis, which at this point is a broad stream, half or three fourths of a mile wide. Ferrying the troops and wagons across occupied the greater part of the afternoon. Waiting our turn to cross over being monotonous, to say the least, another member of the battery, whose name I cannot recall (more evidence that memory has lost its grip) and I backtracked to a dim pathway leading into a small valley. Following this pathway we were led up to a house on the upper rim of a clearing. The only people about the place seemed to be some women who were very much alarmed at our appearance, but were somewhat reassured when we told them that they would suffer no harm. It took us but a short time to discover an abundant store of milk in crocks placed in a long trough thru which flowed clear sparkling water fresh from a cold spring nearby. We proceeded forthwith to drink something less than a quart each of that cold, rich milk and cream. Then discovering a small jar in which was about five pounds, more or less, of butter, we confiscated that also. As we came away we met two infantrymen just coming in, each carrying his gun. Not feeling entirely satisfied at this we went back and watched them fill up as we had done. In the meantime the women had signaled to a man who had been working in an upper field and who came hurrying, all out of breath and terribly excited. He trembled like a leaf, whether from fear or anger I was unable to tell. One of the infantrymen demanded to see the watch the citizen carried—an ordinary silver watch—and was not slow in declaring his intention to take it, when my comrade and I put up a protest against such a high-handed proceeding. Seeing that they were armed and we were not, we felt a little dubious at first but finally persuaded them out of it and they left the old man his watch and departed in peace. After making sure that they were safely away, we took our departure, being careful first to search out the

fallen treetop where we had "cached" the jar of butter, but some hogs had been there and got about one-half the butter. After cleaning off all the soiled parts, what was left tasted just as good as ever. Thinking that the "Scribe" has already touched upon this cotton expedition, here I get off; and get aboard again for the Coldwater expedition late in November '62 when by order of General Halleck a force of several regiments of infantry, some cavalry and artillery was sent over into Mississippi to cut the Mobile & Ohio R. R. in the rear of Pemberton's army, then on the Tallahatchie confronting General Grant. Grant was at that time making the first preliminary move in the Vicksburg campaign. This expedition was commanded by Generals C. C. Hovey and Washburn. Going some miles down the Mississippi by boat and landing on the Mississippi side we commenced the inland march. There were two sections of our Battery in this move but whether there were any other artillery I fail to remember. It was on the first or second day that we came to the Coldwater and some distance down this stream to the Hilden plantation, all white with unpicked cotton. The improvements consisted of the stabling, the usnal negro quarters and the beautiful and stately Hilden residence a little back from the river road. Here the command halted for a time and I with others went into the Hilden mansion and such wanton destruction was there to behold the like of which I had never seen. Broken furniture, doors and windows, and bedclothing torn and scattered about was a sight that aroused my hot indignation. It was generally believed that a gang of night marauders from our command was guilty of this vandalism and thereby "hangs a tale" of which a word later on.

Marching on we came to the banks of the Yockney—a small tributary of the Coldwater. Darkness had fallen and the night camp was not yet established—there seemed to be a problem to solve and no one to do it. So we moved some distance up the stream, halted again, then countermarched and finally after another halting spell we went into camp for the night. It was during a halting spell in this marching and counter-marching that I noticed a gleaming white object down in the bed of the stream. Curiosity led me down the bank of the river to see what was the matter—

and the matter was a fine fish about a foot long. Well, maybe I guess yes, there was a pleased "Yank" just about then. Our detachment was hurriedly preparing to have fish for supper when up came some other boys of the detachment, or one close by, with a gunny sack full of fish bigger than the one we had and better. We had a "sure enough" fish fry that night. Some two or three of the boys, I'm sorry I forget who, had backtracked to some "nigger" houses and on going into one of them had blundered onto something that felt mighty queer under foot. A little investigation on their part soon revealed the darkey's cache. It seems that the place I had found was their fish trap which they had just visited before our coming and gathered in the catch to be gobbled later by the "Yanks." Continuing the march eastward next day to some rising ground the command made camp some time along in the afternoon where a part of the command remained while a strong detachment, or the main force, moved on to Okalona Station and cut the railroad as planned. This damaged Pemberton's army very little, however, as such breaks were soon repaired—railroad breaking and making having become almost an exact science in both armies. All during the three days they were gone there was a steady downpour of rain which made it a time of great discomfort even to those of us left in camp, to say nothing of the troops who were exposed to it on the march. The second day after the return of the troops from Okalona the entire command started on the backward march. It was yet drizzly and rainy, roads muddy and progress slow. Feeling quite safe, and knowing the way, I walked on ahead of everything, and coming to a plantation I went into a log cabin a short distance from the main dwelling. There was no one about the cabin, but a fire burning in the fireplace bespoke recent occupants. I added fuel and soon had a bright, blazing fire. In the meantime a fat chunk of hard shell squash in the chimney corner caught my eye. It took but a few minutes to find a piece of board and scrape a bed in the hot embers in which I placed Mister Squash face downward. After heaping the hot embers and coals over him I fell into a quiet doze while Mister Squash was making ready for the feast an hour or so away. As I had some butter and a little other truck fit to eat, I enjoyed a

dinner such as seldom falls to the lot of the soldier on a rainy day in the enemy's country. In the course of an hour or so I had to leave my friendly fireside and move on with the column. This was another "color spot" in the life of the soldier. But the color changed a day or two later when some sneak thief robbed my haversack of the roasted sweet "taters"—the real sweet kind, the little Brimstone potato—the pat of butter and anything else that might have been fit to eat. So marching leisurely we reached the Mississippi, thence by boats up the river to our camps around Helena.

And now the sequel to the tragedy of the Hilden House. Others of our Battery besides myself who saw the devastation in the Hilden home and who chance to read these lines may be surprised to learn after all these years that soldiers were not the guilty ones; but a man named Green living in that country and an heir to the Hilden estate. The sequel which I will try to relate is from an article I read in the Chicago Tribune along in the early seventies, written by a correspondent for the Tribune who was with our expedition and on the ground where all this occurred. This newspaper man, whose name I have forgotten, went out with our advance cavalry early one morning about daylight, and coming to the Hilden plantation and finding the place apparently deserted, the door wide open, went into the house where seeing such a state of affairs as heretofore described, proceeded to investigate further. In an upper chamber they noticed a pile of rags in a corner and thought they saw a slight movement there. On pulling them apart they found a woman all bruised and bloody, barely alive and conscious, who begged piteously of them not to kill her. They ministered to her as well as they could and finding some colored servants in hiding had her carried to the house of a neighbor some distance down the road where she was tenderly cared for and nursed back to life and health. This apparently dying girl was the once beautiful Miss Hilden, heir to all the Hilden estate. Her parents were both dead. Up to this fateful night she was living in the old home with some of the colored servants who fled the house when the attack was made. Now this man Green, an uncle, was the only other living heir to the Hilden estate. He had chosen

this night of the coming of Federal soldiers as an opportune time to make a murderous attack on this defenseless girl, leave her for dead, seize valuable records and decamp. Suspicion at once pointed to Green as the one to profit by Miss Hilden's death. General Fred P. Steele, commanding at Helena, was apprised of the facts and at once put men on the lookout for the fugitive who in a short time was apprehended with the title deeds to the Hilden property in his possession. He was taken before a military court at Memphis, charged with attempted manslaughter, found guilty, sentenced and executed. So the story ran. At the time this story was written, as I remember it, this reporter had just recently met the former Miss Hilden at a fashionable resort in the East where she was with her husband on their honeymoon. I have talked somewhat at length here as the "Scribe" was not with us on this trip.

Returning down the river after the capture of Arkansas Post one day the fleet anchored on the Louisiana side, near a deserted village. George Wearmith, I think it was, and I carried a cook-stove aboard the boat which was badly needed, as there had been little chance to cook anything. Now we could boil, bake and fry to our hearts' content. The stove was kept going almost continuously day and night. One day some roustabouts run a hauser to a barge our boat had in tow and were careful to lay it on the inner side of our stove from the guard-rail. In a little while the boat veered in it's course, tightening the line and sweeping our stove off into the river with its boiling pot of beans and other grub to feed the fiishes.

Those beans are dust,
That good stove rust,
The roustabouts
In h—— I trust.

Being in no wise dicouraged by our loss thru such an adroit scheme we found and carried aboard another stove at Grenville, another deserted village on the Louisiana shore. This stove was also mighty handy during all the time at Young's Point, and we left it in good repair when the final move toward Vicksburg commenced.

I forgot to mention in its proper connection the affair of Col.

Williamson's mess chest. When on board the transports our Battery was assigned to the lower deck while the infantry, officers and enlisted men were given the upper deck and cabin. Now we artillerymen were crowded for room and had very few accommodations. Nevertheless, Colonel Williamson's colored cook had set up his kitchen on our reservation, so Ike Stevens and I one night planned a relief expedition. With an iron bolt we soon twisted the lock off of the Colonel's mess chest and hurriedly took an invoice of stock. We found a lot of boiled beef, some fine light biscuit and a lot of various knicknacks, all of which we unhesitatingly confiscated. Rousing our chums—Black, Watson, and Tate—we then and there held a midnight festival, all to the good of the service, the result being that the Colonel's outfit early the next morninfi was transferred to the upper deck, nearer home, somewhat relieving the congested state of affairs below.

One other incident, to which I may say I was an eye witness, occurred after the fall of Vicksburg and during our second occupation of Jackson. Alexander Vanausdel and I had just crossed the bridge over Pearl River, when from out on the road in the heavy woods ahead came, as we supposed, the opening roar from a Rebel battery. Not hearing the whirr of a shell or a second explosion we decided to go on and find out what it meant. It seems that three Rebel soldiers were coming into our lines, two of them on the sick list, riding a horse, the third man leading it. The horse struck a bomb buried in the road and exploded it. The horse was instantly killed, a leg of one of the riders was torn off and the other seriously wounded, while the third man escaped injury. The men obviously guilty of this brutal act must be plain to all, but it recoiled on their own people.

One other reminiscence and I am thru with these talks along side lines. Soon after the occurrence above related a considerable force was sent over this same road east to Brandon on the Queen and Crescent R. R. or in that direction. Halting for the noon camp on the east edge of a patch of thick woods, some of us battery boys built a fire in the edge of an adjoining cornfield, and after it had burned awhile, carefully covered some roasting ears in ashes and coals to cook, retiring to the shade of the trees to await

the roasting process. Just about this time a Rebel battery opened fire all unexpectedly from a high hill a mile or two away. They must have had the champion gunner of all the Rebel artillery, for their first shot struck our fire scattering fire, ashes and corn in all directions. But their shots did no damage. Our battery was ordered to open fire in reply, but the shots from our smooth bore brass pieces all fell short. Just then a terrific downpour coming on ended the artillery duel, washed away the bridge in the valley between us and the enemy and caused the expedition to return to Jackson.

Here I yield the the floor to some comrade more able and willing to carry on the good work, hoping in due time to hear from you all. I subscribe myself, Dick Black, late of the late 1st Iowa Battery, now, R. M. Black of Maryville, Mo.

ADOISE

Personal Recollections

OF WILLIAM G. DILTS

AN OPINION AND A PROPHECY

HAD the War of 1861-65 been fought to repel an invasion, the half million or more boys who lost their lives therein would not have died in vain.

If one hundred traitor conspirators, North and South, had been hanged by the neck till they were dead, as they richly deserved to be, there would have been no war, then nor later.

It was a war caused by politicians. For more than fifty years the battle had been waged with words: then when actual war began the boys who did the fighting were innocent victims of the men who safely stayed at home and wrote books about how the fighting ought to be done.

And after it was all over there was not much to be proud of. It was simply a case of "me and my dad and four of my big brothers licked one little man almost to death."

When our two million two-hundred thousand had gone to the front the South had robbed the cradle and the grave, and we had two million and still another two million in reserve.

We ought not to have another war soon, but when we note the greed and graft which envelops our whole country, it seems certain that, unless laws can be devised and enforced to put the house in order, there will be within fifty years, and probably within twenty-five, such a cataclysm as will make the French Revolution of 1798 pale to insignificance.

When the bosses of our cities rob the citizens with little fear of punishment, the danger point is long passed; and when five-hundred men own or control all the wealh of this Nation, and that condition is fast approaching, then will ninety millions of people—less the five hundred—rise and do over again what we did for secession, rebellion and slavery, which, combined, was a curse of small significance compared with what now threatens us.

BIOGRAPHIC

A recital of my recollections will be the short and simple annals of a youth to fortune and to fame unknown: one among the unnumbered thousands, soon to be forgotten, but for whom the illustrious names of Grant, Sherman and Sheridan would be as obscure today as our own. My early years were spent on the farm. There was not much else but farm in those days, and Iowa was then, as now, one of the best on the list. In the early fifties I crossed the plains into the golden State of California, and at that early period of life began to be a tourist and am still doing business in the same old way.

At that early day the State was cosmopolitan. A sprinkling of nearly every nation, tribe and tongue was there. It was there that I was early informed of many of the tales of travelers: of ways that were dark and tricks that were vain which in later years may have saved me much misfortune. I do not recollect that I ever bought a gold brick or bet on another man's game. My return was by way of the Pacific ocean, the Isthmus and the Atlantic to New York.

ENLISTED FOR THE WAR

On the 20th of July, 1861, I left my home in Iowa with the purpose of going to Burlington to join the 5th Infantry. On arriving at their camp in the old fair grounds, I found such vile, dirty food, and only a fence corner and bundle of straw to sleep in, that I became disgusted and would have gone back to private life at once had I not heard that a Battery was raising down in the city. And so it turned out that on the 26th day of July I enlisted in Captain Fletcher's First Iowa Battery and was mustered into the United States service for three years, or during the war, on the 17th day of August as fourth Corporal by Captain Chambers.

I was absent on furlough when the Battery left camp for the front in December, and because of not being able to obtain transportation at once I did not go forward until February 17th following, when I hurried on with a "quinine squad," and reached the Battery just in time to miss the battle of Pea Ridge.

To this day I am not sure whether to be glad or sorry I missed that fight. Many of our poor boys took their last sleep there: the

sleep that knows no waking. I might have been one of them. On the whole I am glad I was not there. I had plenty of it afterwards, and a live dog is better than a dead lion.

SHORT RATIONS

The battle began on Thursday, March 6th, two days before we moved to Cross Timbers, 15 miles north. After leaving the latter place we had the hardest marching and shortest rations of any time during the war. Capt. Griffiths, in a letter dated March 14th wrote: "My poor killed and wounded boys are cared for as well as we are able to care for them. We have had very hard marching: many cold nignts and days and sometimes only a peck of meal to 80 men for 24 hours; but we have borne it all and seen it all, and still many of us live to tell of it. I have an abiding distaste for soldiering and long to be back home and see no more brass buttons as long as I live."

About the same time I wrote from near Forsyth: "We have not had very good fare of late. Fat pork gave out two weeks ago: had corn bread for a week, and for three days we have had no bread. In spite of all these hardships the soldiers are in good spirits but all want to go home. I must say that this is not a business that I would wish to follow for a natural lifetime."

What a pity it was that those writers of books and "On to Richmond" fellows could not have had this experience in their youth for five years or so.

While at Cross Timbers we received our first pay from Uncle Sam. Major Smith, the paymaster, shook hands with me and said, "We are old friends. I knew your father for many years, and knew you when you were only 'so high.'" The boys had no sooner found their money than they began to lose it by gambling.

After repeated urging I recalled some of those "ways that are dark and tricks that are vain" and sat down with a crowd. In an hour I had "won" all their money, some hundred or two dollars. I immediately gave it all back to them and advised them "never again" to bet on a game that they did not know like their own clothes.

FIRST ENGAGEMENT

Chickasaw Bayou was my first time under fire. We disem-

barked and re-embarked three nights in succession, dragging the pieces up and down muddy banks twenty feet high, without other result than valuable experience and a loss of several thousand men in a vain and ill advised assault on Walnut Hills.

But we got revenge at Arkansas Post where we landed Jan. 9th. We outnumbered the enemy nearly three to one, besides we had two gunboats. The result was foregone and the slaughter of Confederates was simply hideous.

When our Battery was ordered forward about 2 P. M., I was busy with a cold lunch. Not wanting to lose what might be my last chance for a square meal, I wedged it hurriedly between the rails of a fence and after 20 minutes firing I ran back and recovered my bread and butter in safety.

General Churchill, in command of the fort, was afterwards for twenty years my near neighbor in Little Rock, Arkansas, and I found him to be a hospitable, quiet old gentleman.

Since the War I have lived in the South for more than forty years and bear testimony to the truth that a more hospitable, generous and kindly people are not to be found anywhere. I have known them to wine and dine a delegation from the North for a week, and then offer to pay their fare home if they needed the money.

From Arkansas Post we were moved on steamboats to Young's Point, Louisiana. The horrors of that trip will never be written. Thousands of men were crowded on boats where hundreds would have been a jam. And the subsequent months in the marshes and bayous of Mississippi were worse, where all were drowned who could not swim. No wonder the Captain wrote on March 4th, "I have resigned twice since being here and both times the papers have been returned 'Not accepted; by order of Major General Grant.' I have given it up as a bad job."

Here we had the small pox, there being thirty-five crses in the Battery. I was among the lucky number—that had it.

INCIDENTS

On a general review one day I had charge of one of our six pounders. General Sherman said to me, "Who has charge of that piece?" "I have General." "Name its parts." And I did my

best. "Can you dismount the piece" was his next shot, for his questions were like premature explosions. I did not tell him I couldn't and he failed to give the order, so I suppose I came out all right.

I met General Sherman again, when, after many years, I was in Washington City to ask General Grant for something "equally as good," which I duly received. At a gathering of some fifteen or twenty of the old guard while there, Sherman, Sheridan, Burdett and others, some one attempted the old quotation:

Vice is a monster of such frightful mien
That to be hated needs but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

It went all round and reached me last. Even Uncle Billy tried it and missed. It was familiar to me since boyhood and when I gave it straight Sherman put his hand on my shoulder and said, Good boy, good boy." That evening I shook hands with our dearly loved commander as I supposed for the last time. But the years passed, and one day found me at Port Rush, a little village in the north of Ireland, and there I met him again. We rode over to the Giants' Causeway, some twelve miles distant, on the first electric road of which I had any knowledge. After an inspection of the mythical bridge across the channel attempted by the Irish giants ages ago, we embarked in an open boat and were rowed far out into the black North sea through fog and mist, out of sight of shore. Returning we visited the wonderful caves worn through solid rock by the waves of countless ages; then on back to Port Rush in what seemed to me very rough weather. And this was my last meeting with General Sherman.

I had occasion to meet General Grant at Young's Point, La., as follows: There had been a little money due me for a long time on account of special service performed, which red tape had cut out. Determined that I would leave no stone unturned, I took the bull by the horns and went personally to headquarters, gaining an interview with little trouble. I explained to him the situation; he called an aid, instructed him to have the claim adjusted at once and in a few days it was settled to my satisfaction. It did not take

him five minutes to settle a claim that had been hanging fire for a year.

PORT GIBSON

On May 1st I cut the fuse, very short for the first shot in that battle, by the dim moonlight at one o'clock in the morning. Climbing the hills the afternoon before, our Battery in the lead with the second brigade, we could look back and see infantry marching in close order, their gleaming muskets like a solid bar of steel miles in length; an immense pendulum swinging back and forth; an inspiring spectacle to be seen once in a lifetime.

Tom Kelliher was number one on my piece that night and the work was so hot that I soon had to exchange places with him, much to my disgust as I had a nice safe place behind the hill between two corn rows. Captain Griffiths says in his history that he thought this was the best fighting he ever did. Gen. Grant sitting on a mule near the Battery the next morning during a charge seemed to be pleased with our work, but he said never a word.

Gen. Carr's report of this action says: "At the end of a tiresome night's march, the second brigade, Col. Stone being in the lead came upon the enemy at one o'clock in the morning posted in a strong position with artillery. Capt. Griffiths' First Iowa Battery, with the assistance of three pieces of Klauss' 1st Indiana Battery, fought him for over two hours and finally at 3 A. M. drove him away."

VICKSBURG TO ATLANTA

The siege and capture of Vicksburg and Jackson quickly followed. Then the mighty Mississippi went unvexed to the sea. The many battles and campaigns in which our Battery took part and received honorable mention are twice told tales and are recited elsewhere.

We never lost a piece, although Col. Wm. Smith, 31st Iowa, in his report of May 28th at Dallas, Ga., said: "Three pieces of the 1st Iowa Battery, Capt. Griffith, were in front, outside of our breastworks, had been captured by the enemy. This we learned from the drivers who were taking the horses to the rear: When the 6th Iowa boys went out and hauled back the cannon by hand." These fellows did help us out a little but were far from being the

whole show. Our own boys staid with the guns until they were safely behind our breastworks where they ought to have been all the time.

When Gen. Logan was a candidate for vice president I wrote to him and asked if it was true that at Dallas he came down into the trenches with a box of cartridges and an axe and yelled, "Give them h—l boys and I will carry you cartridges!" He said in reply, "I have heard the story and it brings to mind many interesting episodes of the rebellion."

IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY

At Dallas I met with an adventure. Tom Evrett and I left camp one afternoon in search of forage. We had gone but a short distance towards the rear when Tom concluded the front was the best place for him and turned back. I went on alone and at the end of a thirty minutes' ride a sudden turn of the road brought me within twenty feet of two Confederates: a captain and a private in the familiar grey, mounted and armed with carbine and sabre. In one moment I had thrills enough to last a lifetime. I could see the sun, moon, and all the stars in broad day-light: a great dark cloud in the distance with the grim spectre, Andersonville, dancing like lightning flashes before my eyes.

Before I could make up my mind to make a run for it or fight at odds of two to one, the captain said with a pleasant smile, "How d'ye do. Where are you going?" I told him and he said, "I think you had better go back to camp with me." Then he told me that they were two of Sherman's spies and had been inside of the Rebel lines for three days: that a mile or two farther out would be dangerous ground for a "bummer," and I was easily persuaded to take the back track.

JULY TWENTY SECOND

The Atlanta campaign ended my service. Captain Griffiths had been acting Chief of artillery after we left Vicksburg. At Bridgeport he detailed me as his clerk. This position I believe relieved me of some of the camp drudgery, but I do not recollect that I missed much of the fighting. Handling a pen or pencil was much more to my liking than using the rammer of a ten-pound parrott gun, and as the pen is mightier than the sword, I have held to the

pen ever since, never having done much else.

The 22nd of July was my last battle. We had been resting easy nearly all the morning, firing a few shots into the city maybe which was about two and a half miles away. There was no enemy in sight nor in hearing. Everywhere silence reigned. It proved to be the calm before the storm. About noon signs appeared that trouble was about to begin. We were scattered about eating our dinners when a few shots to our left and rear, probably a mile away broke the stillness. I was sitting near the captain and called his attention to the shots. "Nothing but some of Sherman's bummers after sheep or hogs," he said. Again the stillness seemed to envelope everything as a fog on a quiet morning in spring. But it was in the air that it was not going to last for long. With the suddenness and force of a thunderbolt Hood was upon us. Sherman's "hell" with its ten-thousand furies had struck us on the left and rear where we least expected it, but by a fortunate accident were well prepared.

The fighting was still a mile away but we knew our time would come soon. So there was mounting in hot haste; regiments and brigades were rushed to our left, between us and where we could plainly see the enemy preparing to charge. Our infantry formed in rear of a ten rail fence which melted faster than a snow flake in a chinook wind and none too soon, as the Rebel lines were less than a hundred yards away. Lying flat behind the rails our men for once had an advantage and met the savage onslaught with a steady roar which was music to us who were denied a hand in the game.

The smoke lifted for a minute and the ground was seen covered with dead and wounded and fleeing Rebels. But they formed and charged again; and a third and fourth time, and each time with the same result—total defeat. This was the finest fighting I had seen up to this time, but it became more interesting an hour or so later.

A line of skirmishers had been sent to our front and was told to keep going until they found the enemy. They found him all right and came back with thousands of him at their heels. Again the air was filled with thousands, millions of missles, large and

small. They sung in our ears like bees. They dropped upon our heads huge limbs from the trees, and dug up the ground beneath our feet and often with a sickening "thud" announced that a bullet had found its billet. We were plainly outnumbered. The line was broken to right and left. De Gress' battery to our right was lost; our support on the left, the 48th Ohio, had repeatedly charged the enemy; I saw their colonel fall at its head and the regiment broken to pieces; the Rebels were within twenty feet of our guns which were so hot we could hardly load and fire them; we had been firing eight rounds a minute for more than an hour. The captain was sitting his horse quietly as if on dress parade when Lieut. Gay, in command of the battery, said "Captain, see them coming! See them coming! What shall we do?" and the captain said, "well I guess we'd better get out of here."

WM. G. DILTS
IN WAR TIME

But still we did not go. Our supports rallied and drove them back again and we kept on firing, solid shot and shell, shrapnel, spherical case and double shotted canister, any old thing to make it interesting for our friends, the enemy. I did not hear the order to retreat. I only know that when we found there were but three men on the piece, with two horses and one driver, two of us to the wheels and one to the trail we raised the piece out of the trench a foot deep and ran it to the limber and hooked on, and us for the rear!

FORTY YEARS LATER

I was number four on a brass six-pounder that day. We had only three feet of "dirt." I had less than one month to serve, and never having been wounded I thought how unfortunate it would be to be killed on the last day in the evening; but I stood up and took the chances and tried to

dodge the big ones.

I tried to ride out on the gun, but it was too hot and I climbed on the limber chest. One man was already there but he was soon shot and I fell forward in front for fear I would be, and rode out in that way: and so the one driver and I and the two horses and gun arrived at the rear in safety.

We had no sooner reached our new position, 400 yards in the rear, than Gen. Logan came up to where Gen. Harrow was standing near our battery, ordered him to mount his horse, form his men and re-take the works if he "lost every d—n man he had." Harrow obeyed, took the works and not a shot was fired.

And so our term of service ended in a blaze of glory. In the struggle before Atlanta there was enough for all and Sherman could say—Atlanta is ours and fairly won.

SOME UNWRITTEN HISTORY

On the next morning after the battle Generals Logan, Harrow and others were gathered near our headquarters, and of course were talking about the fight on the 22nd. From this talk it was made clear that the sixteenth corps, about nine thousand men, were ordered to move at 4 o'clock on the morning of the 22nd to take a position six miles to the left and rear: that it was four hours late in starting and then moved slowly and for that reason was exactly in the right place to meet Hood's first charge where he thought to strike McPherson's left and rear "in air."

I have never seen an account of this fortunate accident in print. It illustrates how brittle may be the thread on which sometimes hangs the fate of men and Nations.

HOME AGAIN

On August 16th, 1864, Captain Griffiths and forty-five members of the Battery were mustered out at Davenport. I wrote most if not all of the discharges and pay rolls. When I asked the Captain what complexion, he said, "rosy" and I wrote it that way. During Grant's two administrations Captain Griffiths was Register of U. S. Land Office at Des Moines, Iowa, and I held the same position at Ironton, Mo., and we had a good deal of pleasant correspondence for several years.

In 1865 when Captain Gay came back with the balance of the

Battery I was in Davenport making a bluff at getting a business education, and again took a hand at discharges and pay rolls.

We were all tired of the hazzards of war and glad to go to our homes. But we had "saved the country." The politicians' war was over. They could now sit down, write more books and count their gains and losses. The billions of treasure wasted counted for nothing, for that could be replaced, and has been, eight times over; but the waste of lives in the flower of youth, and the desolated homes will never be regained nor forgotten. If we had failed we would have a monarchy today with a king from the South; a house of lords with dukes and duchesses galore to rule over us.

But we did not fail; and those of us who still live remember the four long, weary years of marching through wet and cold and hunger; through scorching heat and dreadful bloody battle grounds; through sickness, wounds and prisons. But we are glad to know that, because of our sacrifice, and the greater sacrifice of those who died that their government might live, there is today one country and one flag, and that, the battle over and the victory won, for us there will be a rest, by and by.